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**THE REAL EXHIBITORS  
EXHIBITED.**



# THE REAL EXHIBITORS EXHIBITED ;

OR,

AN INQUIRY INTO THE CONDITION OF THOSE  
INDUSTRIAL CLASSES WHO HAVE REALLY  
REPRESENTED ENGLAND AT THE  
GREAT EXHIBITION.

BY THE

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## REAL EXHIBITORS EXHIBITED;

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THE accounts which our forefathers have left us of the condition of our island some century or two ago, as compared with what we witness now, lead us to the conclusion, that changes of a very marked and highly beneficial character have taken place in the climate of this country.

The deep snows and severe frosts of the protracted winters of former times are now comparatively unknown amongst us. The Thames is now no longer conscious of the strange burden of the roasting ox; her icy shackles have been transferred to more northern streams, and passing from the category of the Volga, the Dnieper, the Danube, she claims companionship with the Tagus, the Tiber, and the Po.

Now they who investigate the causes of such a change, ascribe it in no small degree, to the progress which has been made in the agricultural improvements of our country. The felling of forests, the draining of marshes, the more uniform and skilful cultivation of the general surface of the land, are assigned as causes adequate to account for the climatorial and atmospheric change. If such may truly be regarded as sufficient to explain this change, then we have at once an instance, in physical things, of a *great principle*, which will apply with no less force in

social matters—namely, that local and individual improvements issue in general amelioration; and that the greatest aggregate of real prosperity is but the best combination of the greatest number of particular instances of well-being.

It is such a consideration as this that gives weight and importance to the subject of our present investigation. If we would see the moral atmosphere of our country free from those sudden and extreme variations which cripple a nation's energies, freeze up a nation's charity, and thus entail a nation's poverty, and perpetuate its misery—if we would provide that what, under wiser regulations, would shine with a genial, fertilising, and cheering ray, should not call forth only noxious exhalations which shall hide from view the only source of happiness and health, and then return to desolate society, and propagate its own mischief-making influence—if we would wisely and effectually promote the general peace and prosperity of the community—then does it become us cautiously to examine the condition of each section of the body social, diligently to watch its progress, prudently to minister to its health, and delicately to stimulate the development of the principles of its improvement. The noxious gases which rise from the putrescent stagnations of the lower classes, float, with disease and death in their train, to the apparent security and fancied exemption of the higher ranks of society. The entire body politic becomes tainted, its strength droops, and remedial measures of a sharp and painful nature are then found to be necessary, because preventive or corrective measures have been forgotten or despised.

The subject of our present inquiry is the condition of the industrial classes—whether their feelings, principles, aspirations, habits, are such as constitute them happy in themselves, and hopeful as the supporters of the nation's greatness. In the prosecution of this inquiry, men of all ranks ought to feel an interest. The class that is the subject of it, our *working fellow-countrymen*, have, in such a *subject*, much that deserves their serious attention. We *profess* to turn the light of their own and of other men's

observation in upon their own position and prospects, that they may be enabled, as rational and responsible beings, to realize their true state, to remedy evils, if such shall appear, and to collect and arrange materials out of which to construct the fabric of their future peace.

To refuse to pause and ponder, is alike indicative of imbecility of mind, and prophetic of coming evil. Coolly and calmly to contemplate his position, is wisdom *in the weak man*; as it suggests a check to the career of misfortune, points to the causes of failure and to the openings of hope, familiarizes the mind to the worst, and allows it to collect its scattered energies that the anticipation of uncertain evil had dispersed. *To the strong man* it gives confidence and communicates resolution, as it exhibits the secret of his strength, and explains the process of his success. The calm, dispassionate attention, therefore, of the operative and productive classes is especially invited, while their candid consideration and charitable appreciation of motives are asked, if, in attempting to probe faithfully to the very bottom of any deeply-seated sore, the operator's hand should seem unfeeling and unnecessarily to wound.

But this too is a subject full of interest to *employers*. Let not such think that they are already sufficiently acquainted with it. Their business engagements may bring them into frequent contact with the working man, but they see him often in a false and unnatural position. A sense of constraint in their master's presence, or a spirit of suspicion, will oft-times induce the cloaking of the inner man; and on subjects that greatly affect his interest, the employer is often the very person to be kept longest in the dark. It is into the ear of him that shares his situation, or that has won his confidence, that the real sentiments of the workman's heart are poured. Noble sentiments, at times, they are, gushing forth at the magic touch of some trusted one, from the deep fountains of feeling, and sparkling in the transparency of ingenuous honesty; but oh! how dark, how deadly, when fermenting under the bitter recollection of fancied

wrongs, or poisoned by the insinuations of evil advisers, they secretly instil into kindred minds. Wise is he who shall be content to investigate so interesting a theme, that he may be able to cast in the salt of truth, heal the bitter waters of minds like these, and change them in their hidden and unhappy fountain.

Neither let employers despise this subject, as though they were inaccessible to harm. Their prosperity, to a greater extent than at first sight may appear, is mixed up with the prosperity of their operatives. The security of their property, the quality of the goods produced, the amount of waste in the different productive processes, all are influenced by the character of the persons employed, and the estimation in which they hold him whose servants they are.

"The master's eye fattens the horse," is a wise proverb, intimating the advantages which personal inspection and supervision ensure; but how much more is his interest secured when the regulating principle in his workmen is "Ye who are servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward" (1 Pet. ii. 18), or, "Servants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, *as unto Christ*" (Ephes. vi. 6). This is the best, because the loftiest and holiest and most uniform standard by which the characters of the employed are to be tested; and even if there were no considerations of duty, regard for mere pecuniary benefit will urge every wise employer to consider how best he may elevate his servants the nearest to this principle of action.

But considerations of duty cannot, must not be put out of sight, where immortal beings act upon each other.

The capitalist, in the selection and employment of mere material machines, may choose those of old or new, good or bad construction, as he sees fit, and may allow them to remain in perfect or imperfect repair, as he pleases. Though glaring evidences of his folly, and busy workers of *his ruin*, they cannot become loud-tongued accusers of *his neglect*. It is not, however, thus in reference to that

wondrously complex, and mysteriously constructed machine of strange destiny, that originates the conception, or manipulates the construction, or directs the motion of that merely material mechanism, No! he is a fellow-immortal, that dependent operative. A relationship springs up between him and his employer. The common master of them both has linked their destinies together. Having put into the power of one the control of the supply of the bodily wants of the other, the Almighty has given that one an influence over his fellow; and it is at his peril that he uses it otherwise than for good and for God.

Masters, therefore, are urged to study this question, and to promote means for its true solution. But *rulers* likewise have duties in reference to this subject. To these, as the political fathers of the social family, the individual members have committed their particular rights, in order that they may receive them again at their hands, to be exercised in due subordination to the common interests of the mass. Deriving their authority from the entire community, rulers are required to promote the conjoint good of the whole; and abstracting themselves from the partial consideration of merely sectional interests, so to influence, direct, control, combine and blend the various constituent elements of society, as to secure to all the blessings of order, liberty, peace, protection, happiness.

In order to this, intelligence, as well as integrity is needed, enlarged views as to the requisite arrangement of comprehensive plans, and accurate information as to the peculiar condition and rights of different classes. Fearful mistakes, fraught with injustice and danger, may be the consequence of undue attention to any particular class. The evil results may not be at once apparent on the commission of a political solecism, but time serves only to develop and strengthen the latent mischief.

The town of Rotherham is built on ground beneath which is a seam of coal, that has now for years been *on fire*. The inhabitants, from familiarity with the

subterranean danger, have almost ceased to remember its existence, till the sinking occasionally of the foundation of a building, or the appearance from time to time of the flame at the surface, may put them on devising measures for the removal of the evil.

Now the position of the body politic may often be very similar. While all on the surface may seem calm and peaceful and prosperous, while the more observable portion of society may seem secure and healthy, the elements of mischief may be smothering beneath, amongst the more concealed but not therefore less important classes of the lower ranks of men. Individuals may now and then be seen to suffer from the latent evil, and from time to time there may be indications at the surface, as we witnessed on the 10th April, 1848, of the frightful character of the threatening calamity. These are merciful warnings, which whisper wisdom; and happy are they, who from due observation of the disturbing causes, shall be able to quench the nascent conflagration, and provide, in the breathing-time of opportunity, for the peace and safety of those whose destinies they rule. That such may ever be the wise policy of the constituted authorities of our land, must be the wish of every patriot; and he, whose position furnishes him with opportunities of throwing light on the distinctive condition of any particular part of the population in which he lives, must feel an impulsive something, forbidding him to withhold that which may tend to the promotion of the common weal.

## CHAPTER I.

### ON THE INDUSTRIAL CLASSES CONSIDERED AS INDIVIDUALS.

IN estimating the character of individuals in this class, *it is only to those more marked features which are not common to the species, but the consequence of peculiar circumstances, that our enquiry can extend.* If, on

investigation, it shall appear, that besides the different shades of character that distinguish man from man, there are also to be traced certain modifications of feeling, thought, and general mental condition, referable to particular influences which affect whole classes of individuals, we have gained no small advantage in our estimate of their entire state, and wisdom as to the arrangement of plans to promote their improvement.

By keeping thus clearly and distinctly separate, whatever has its origin in external influence and peculiarity of position, from that which is inherent in their nature as children of a fallen father, we shall be able more clearly to ascertain the limits within which the application of merely human regulations is legitimate, and avoid the folly and disappointment of expecting from plans which affect only the external position, results that are to be traced only to agencies and influences which can reach and change the heart. We will, therefore, endeavour to follow this interesting portion of our countrymen into their retirement, and watch the phases of their real characters. If our study of them shall enable us to suggest to them the side on which defects appear, and the source from which danger springs, and the direction in which improvement may be found; or if we shall succeed in exhibiting to their more enlightened fellow-creatures the kind of treatment they need, and the attention they demand, the labour expended will not be in vain.

Our first consideration of them, in an individual capacity, shall be as to their *peculiar habit of thought*. That there is such a peculiar habit amongst the manufacturing and working classes we feel strongly persuaded. The very nature of their engagements generates it. The various processes of the modifications of matter are what they are constantly conversant with; and this first tends to indispose them, and then to unfit them for the observation of the workings of mind. Surrounded on every hand by the evidences and productions of the skill of man, interest in and appreciation of the noble, the dignified, the beautiful, are apt to be gradually



destroyed. While the peasant is familiarised, in his daily engagements, with the ten thousand combinations of the beautiful, and the benevolent, and the merciful and the wise, which the face of nature is continually presenting and impressing upon the dullest and most unfeeling of her beholders—the artizan is brought into constant contact with the petty, and imperfect, and ungraceful, and uniform operations of the inventions of man's wisdom. He soon sees through the few movements which compose the action of the most complex mechanism; and there is nothing of mystery, magnitude, or magnificence, to leave its sanctifying impress upon the soul. The workings of his intellect accommodate themselves to the working of the machine that is his daily companion; instead of panting continually in ever-quickening pursuit of the vast, and the incomprehensible, and the infinite, that play round about the path of his happier brother.

The greatest proportion of the ideas that enter into the minds of men thus situated, come in through the *door of perception*; and these, from the very nature of the subjects whence they come, viz.: the works and ways of men—are not of a very high order. The ennobling *faculty of reflection* furnishes comparatively but few ideas; and even these too often indicate the character of the materials from the combinations of which they arise. The collection of crude notions—unregulated and confused, consequently constitutes the mind's store,—and the fabric of well-constructed reasoning, and solid and substantial argument is rarely formed out of these confused elements. These things tell sensibly, we conceive, on the character and habits of thought of the class, and lower the moral principle, and impair the moral sensibilities.

Then, again, the observation of the certainty of mechanical results has its influence in fostering and developing and confirming the innate principle of pride and self-dependence. The workman is called upon, in the exercise of his labours, to watch and regulate the action *of mechanism* which requires but the attention of him-

self and others to accomplish its intended objects. He feels himself a part of a system of uniform agencies and constantly recurring certain effects. The materials take the form and fashion that his skill intends, and he learns to rely on his own efforts as the secret and source of success. This experience follows him into the moral world. While the agriculturist learns, from reiterated instances, that all his labour is but subsidiary to, and dependent on, the effects and co-operation of a higher Power, and so learns constantly the beneficial lessons of submission, patience, and self-abasement,—the manufacturing and mechanical operative (and it is to such that our present remarks are intended to apply) is likely to become self-conceited, self-opinionated, self-dependent—as having been accustomed to refer his success in the ordinary concerns of business engagements to the skill, and care, and diligence of his own individual efforts. The feelings of veneration which received a shock from the constant converse with mere material things bearing simply the impress of the skill of man, are still further checked and weakened by this additional influence developing his pride. The man carries these principles into the consideration of his moral duties, his estimate of moral arguments and motives, his conception of his responsibilities towards his fellows and his God; and hence springs the peculiar modification of his habits of thought.

Another consideration of the peculiar position of the class will exhibit another influence acting on his mental and moral habits. The subdivision of labour, which is now so general, while it has tended to the elevation of the character of our manufacturing productions, and of our ability to cope successfully with rival productive nations, has had an injurious effect upon the intellectual powers of our labouring classes—though it has perfected their manufacturing skill. To be constantly employed in the polishing of a needle, the grinding of a piece of metal, the drawing out of a thread of cotton, the clipping of a piece of pin-wire—must have, to no small degree, a reflex influence on the thinking being, by whom the

operation is performed. It leads him to magnify the importance of *particulars*, and induces forgetfulness of their bearing on *general results*. The mind is led to bend all its power to the observation and investigation of individual facts; but to overlook their affinity with, and cohesion to, other not less important ones; and inconclusive arguments, unfair and illogical inferences, are the natural and pernicious results. Enlarged and comprehensive conceptions will be beyond the field of view of such contracted minds; and elevated thought will not be reached by the stretch of such stunted intellects.

Narrowness of mind will be characteristic of the class to which such mental manacles are applied; and intellectual deformity and weakness must be the result when one faculty of the mind is developed at the risk of the dwarfing of all the rest. While this process renders a man the tool of designing exaggerators of particular facts, whether they be grievances or corrections of grievances—the habit of self-dependence which we have noticed already, makes him the stubborn bigot, the impracticable stickler for his own mistaken and monstrous opinions.

But there is another tendency, in the present position of our manufacturing and other working classes, to the production of a painfully peculiar habit of thought. In the mining and manufacturing—and even mercantile parts of our kingdom—the line which distinguishes employers and employed is daily becoming broader and more discernible. Capitalists no longer, as a general rule, have their residences in the neighbourhood where their business is conducted, and where the cottages of their servants are to be found. Crowded together on particular spots, the operatives have no longer in the midst of them the instructive, civilizing, and elevating examples of families of the rich, or the salutary supervision and control of those whose authority they are likely to respect. They feel themselves to be a proscribed, and they persuade themselves that they are thereby an injured, class. Wrapping themselves up within *their own loneliness*, and brooding mournfully over their

imagined or real wrongs, they learn to have selfish thoughts and feelings, and then looking round on what they deem a tyrannical and unfeeling aristocracy, they learn too soon to have envious and vindictive ones. The recollection of experienced or traditionary distress amongst the working classes, in the transition periods when manual was superseded by machine labour—the burning, scalding memory of privations endured in contests with masters about the amount of wages—the consciousness of relaxing physical energies, and gradually decaying health—the suspicion of the slow but certain deterioration of the class to which they belong, as to position, prospects, and bodily and moral power,—these things, dexterously and perseveringly presented by designing men in the guise of friends, tend to deepen and perpetuate the unhappy mental peculiarities of which we speak.

But while we thus would attempt faithfully to exhibit the tendency of their position as affecting the mental habits of our operative fellow-countrymen, we would guard against any misinterpretation of our meaning. That some, or even all, of these evils do appear in multitudes of our working classes, we cannot, we dare not, but avow; but that all are thus influenced, we as strongly deny. It is *the tendency* we are attempting to explain.

There is a depth and a vigour of intellectual power—a warmth and elevation of moral feeling, a fulness of the most exquisite sensibilities, an elevation of “substance-realizing” faith, a fervour of holy love, that cannot be surpassed in the highest and most refined ranks of life. Other agencies, of sweetly soothing power, have stilled the restless furies of the soul. The voice of sympathy, the tone of friendly interest, the hallowed accents of Christian brotherhood, have thrilled through thousands of workmen’s hearts, have braced up many a discordant string upon the mental and spiritual lyre, and caused it to re-echo the sweet note of Christian Charity. They are not to be counted weeds that infest the gardea of society. No : they are deathless perennial plants, whose

parent stock was first nipped in Paradise ; that are stunted still in their uncongenial position ; but when the free circulation of the spirit-spoken truth of God shall kiss their shrivelled foliage, and the blessing-laden dew of God's grace shall visit them, they will revive and bloom anew—the ornament of their country,—the admiration and the blessing of observant nations of the earth.

Another point of view in which to consider their condition as individuals, is the *character and extent of their education*. By this we must understand, not merely the communication of information, but the cultivation of the intellectual and moral powers, the forming of correct habits of thought, the instilling of right principles, and the suggesting of proper motives of action. *Teaching* is not necessarily *education*—the former merely supplies the tools, and imparts skill in using them—the latter causes them to be brought to bear on the proper business of life ; the one terminates in knowledge, the other advances through knowledge to wisdom.

How much education in its full sense tells on the formation of individual character, we can all understand who have given serious attention to the subject. What-ever tends simply to develop the merely animal part of our constitution, *debases* ; whatever tends to enlarge the intellectual and mental faculties *elevates and refines* ; whatever serves to deepen and expand the spiritual and religious sensibilities, *dignifies* by the privileges to which it advances, *delights* by the pure pleasures to which it gives access, *sanctifies*, by the holy conceptions, aspirations, hopes, to which it necessarily gives rise.

“ The Christian is the highest style of man.” First in order of importance and exquisiteness are the *pleasures of the soul*, the sweets which the presence of God communicates to the hearts that have been taught to love Him. Then come the pleasures that spring from the *development of thought*, the *birth of idea*. And lowest of all, and succeeding only after a long interval to the other two, are the *pleasures of sense*, the delights which depend for their being or continuance on the existence of the *bodily house* in which the soul sojourns. To seek

the indulgence of these lowest is the instinctive impulse of animal nature; to promote the development of the second is the object and design of intellectual culture: to ensure the existence and enlargement of the first, is the peculiar prerogative of Divine grace, in the use of those means which His wisdom has appointed. The manner and degree in which this last has influenced the classes whose condition we are considering, will be investigated in a subsequent part of this work. Our present consideration has reference to the machinery employed, and the results discernible so far as their intellectual improvement and mental growth are concerned.

Public attention has been of late much directed to this important and formerly much neglected subject; and many recent investigations enable us to arrive at closer approximation than once we could, to the truth of the educational position of the lower orders of society. To make this tell on our present inquiry, we shall only produce evidence bearing upon the time when the educational agency would be applied to those of our operatives who have now arrived at a state of manhood. It is plain, that the recent efforts for an extension of the *means*, and improvement in the *method* of education can but very partially affect the individual character of those who have long since passed the period of life in which the elements of education are ordinarily acquired. If the educational period of a man, who is now *forty years of age*, be taken as commencing at *his fifth year*, then 1816, A.D., will be the date from which our investigation with regard to him should commence; and after allowance made for efforts telling upon him after his arrival at man's estate, the interval from 1816 to 1826 will give us something of data on which to found our estimate of his probable information now; and on comparing this estimate with the observed condition of the generality of such persons at the present day, we shall see the connexion between the means employed and the end accomplished.

On referring to a return ordered by Parliament in the

year 1819, we find that there were then in England and Wales 16,055 Day Schools, containing 619,636 scholars, and 5,463 Sunday Schools, having 477,225 scholars. The census of 1811 gives the population of the country as 10,150,615, and that for 1821 gives it as 11,978,875. The difference between these sums is 1,828,260, as the increase of the ten years. Four-fifths of difference, or 1,482,608, added to the amount of population in 1811, will give us nearly the population of 1819, namely, 11,633,223. In this year, then, out of this population there were 619,636 children in Day Schools, or not quite 1 in every 18 of the entire population, and 477,225 in Sunday Schools, or not much more than 1 in every 25. Now, by a calculation made on the Parliamentary Census of 1821, it appeared that 24 *per cent. of the whole population* was between the ages of 5 and 15 years, and hence we discover that at this period, while there was 24 *per cent.* or 1 person in every  $4\frac{1}{5}$  *at an age at which they ought to be receiving an education*, only 1 in every 18 *was at a Day School*, and only 1 in every 25 *at a Sunday School*.

This gives us a very melancholy view of the amount of educational appliances that existed in the kingdom, when men who are now from forty to thirty years of age were in their childhood, needing instructing and fitted to be taught. But defective as was *the amount* of the education then given, it is but too evident that the *quality* of it was still more lamentably low. The character of the books used—the kind of discipline enforced—and the qualifications of the teachers employed, were all such as told most prejudicially on the minds and morals of the pupils. The village schoolmaster was, in too many instances, the superannuated dependant of the parish squire, and the post of educating the young was but too commonly viewed as the place in which *they* might be provided for, who had been unsuccessful in other walks of life. Their mental attainments and previous habits too often entirely unfitted them for cultivating the intellect, or elevating the moral character of those committed to their care. There was nothing in

the school attractive to the children—nothing in the observed results of the education which was likely to induce parents to make a personal sacrifice to secure that for their little ones which usually was presented in so unfavourable a light.

There are, we conceive, few of the working classes of forty years of age that were then at school, who have not now some amusing recollections of the character of the school-day drillings which were to impart their so-called scholarship. He that should read with the greatest rapidity—and with the most perfect scholastic twang—he that could gallop most cleverly over the rough ground of the appointed lesson that had been purposely broken by an annoyingly skilful disposition of sesquipedalian words, of whose meaning neither he nor his master ever deemed it necessary that he should have the shadow of an idea—he to whom Walkinghame had become a thrice thumbed book, while the first principles of arithmetic were nevertheless a thing unknown—he it was that became the pride of the master, the admiration of the pupils, the prodigy of the school. Such a one, though considered by a crowd of less persevering dullards to be the very impersonification of scholarship, had been but laying up in his memory *a few deaf ears*, and when the winnowing time of the world's business, and the hunger-period of his own intellectual wants arrived, he found but chaff as the worthless result of all his misguided efforts. Can we wonder, need we feel disappointed, if amongst men who were subjected to such a system of educational mockery, many should evince but little advance in, and less relish for, that which had been offered in such burlesque to their opening intellects and rising impulses. We are reaping, naturally and necessarily, in the existence of a mass of uneducated operatives, the fruit of that seed which our forefathers had sown.

It is true, that mechanics' institutions, adult classes, mutual improvement societies, and, above all, Sunday schools, have done much to remedy this state of things; but every observant investigator of the educational



condition of our adult population must deplore the grievous amount of the deficiency in the mere elements of education that is to be found among them.

The fact, deduced from the Report of the Registrar-General, that, in 1840, 33·6 per cent. of the entire population of the kingdom, and even 49·9 per cent. of the manufacturing and mining parts of it, signed the marriage registers with marks—this fact would intimate how many more there may be, who, while they possess the power of reading or writing imperfectly, yet have not that facility which makes the gaining information from the writings of others a pleasing and a desired work.

But there is another point in which to view the individual character of our working classes, and that is, as to *the peculiarities of their recreations*. The character of a people may be often learned, to no small extent, by the nature of their sports and pastimes. In these, the restraint of discipline is laid aside, the formality of imitation forgotten, and the unfettered tendencies of the inner man are indicated, so that the attendant observer may watch the workings of the natural features of the character, and note the contour of the people's mental developments. The artificial cloaks of mannerism and art are swept aside in the unconstrained freedom, the "deshabille" of the hour of relaxation. The mind, long pent up in the performance of the drudgery of the appointed service, finds vent when the hour of recreation comes, and thoughts and feelings that have been checked and curbed from a sense of propriety or consciousness of self-interest, now rush out freely, and may be observed closely. In the amusements of a people we see all those minute actions of the muscles—those ever-varying yet ever instructive changes of expression, which give life and individuality to the national countenance. In them are all those finer touches which pourtray what the mere general outline of the historian could never express by any description of the laws, institutions, and exploits of a people.

*In the earliest period of a people's history, when agriculture has been yet unpractised, and the chase*

furnishes the chief means of the people's support, we find the Nimrods of its history ; and fleetness, prowess, skill against the beasts of the field, the great objects at which the employment of leisure hours is directed.— When a people become settled in a particular locality, and accumulate possessions in the produce of the earth which they are required to defend against the efforts of envious neighbours, then sports that imply courage and require military strength and skill are popular. The shield and the cestus take the place of the hunting spear and toil ; and the successful combatant is honoured amongst a nation of warriors, as the successful hunter had been in a nation whose chief employment had been the chase. Then, as the spirit of foreign enterprize, the influences of religion, the refinements of intellectual culture progress, we find tournaments and processions, and dramatic representations occupy the people,—each tending to point to the degree of civilization to which the nation has advanced.

To trace the sources from which the prevailing amusements of our people were derived, the circumstances and periods in which they severally are discoverable, might be a subject of interesting search ; but to point to the general connexion between the amusements and character of a people, is all that is needful here. In estimating the peculiarities of our operative population, as they respect their recreations, while *really* we still see much to deplore and remedy,—*relatively* we cannot but see much to cheer and encourage. There is not now, as was usual in olden time, the gross brutality of their amusements to be pointed at. Bear and bull-baiting, cock-fighting, prize-fighting, which were so disgracefully prevalent and popular in the days of our fathers, are now fast disappearing from the list of the sources of pleasure to the working man. The manner, too, in which museums, exhibitions of arts and manufactures, lecture-rooms, etc., are visited and valued by a continually increasing number of thoughtful, interested, and intelligent operatives,—the literary institutions springing up in different parts of the country, supported and fre-

mented mainly by the same classes—are indications of progress in a right direction, and serve to show that, in these respects at least, there has been, relatively, much improvement.

Still, there is *really* much to lament, in the manner in which the working man's leisure hours are far too frequently passed. In investigating their condition in this respect, one sad and striking fact presents itself in painful prominence, and that is, *drunkenness*. This sin is a blot upon the fair face of our national character,—a canker-worm, eating into the very heart of the domestic happiness of our land. Its strange fascination hangs round about the path of thousands of working men, and beckons them onward over the graves of those that have fallen already under its malignant influences, to misery, disgrace, and ruin. Oh, that some friendly hand would pluck the bandage from the eyes of those that are led headlong to destruction; that some mighty voice would break up the mysterious sleep in which it has lulled its miserable victims—that some disenchanting sound of loving accent might dispel the mighty magic by which this evil has charmed so many minds! Could but this foul bird of evil omen be scared away from the hearts and homes of our fellow-men, happiness would again return,—religion, with her train of comforts and rich pleasures, would be introduced to thousands that have long been strangers to her character, her promises and her powers. Let our operative fellow countrymen well and calmly consider this subject. The indulgence of this sad propensity is the source and secret of half their woe.

Intoxication blunts the intellectual powers, chills the affections, deadens the moral sensibilities, degrades and brutalizes the entire soul. How can the accustomed ingenuity and necessary coolness of calculation be expected in the head that is flushed and heavy from the effects of last night's debauch? Who may expect from the hand trembling from the shock which yesterday's *unnatural* excitement leaves behind, that delicacy of *touch*, that perfection of artistic skill, which years of

diligent perseverance had been spent in acquiring. The temper easily ruffled, the passions ready to take fire on trifling provocations, the conscience ill at ease, the foreboding of coming misery casting its dark shadow over the present,—the feeling of gradual deterioration in faculties, position, prospects,—these are all the drunkard's own, and point the sting which cruelly wounds and tortures his coward heart. Siren-like, this strange influence lures only to destroy ; and beneath the sparkling of the wine-cup are the nauseous poisonous lees at which the heart revolts.

The history of the ravages of drunkenness would far exceed in horror that of the ravages of the plague,—both as it respects the number of its victims and the agony of their tortures. No spoiler's track was ever marked with more ghastly relics of wretched ruined ones ; and never came there on the breeze a deeper, louder, more continued moan than that which heavy hearts have uttered under the tyrant grasp of this ruthless monster. Oh, ye responsible, sensitive immortals, ye beings of wondrous intelligence and high destiny, on whose hearts the image of the High God may be written by the mysterious pencilings of the Sun of Righteousness—Oh, be persuaded to look calmly at the real features of this witching sorceress. Pluck off the mask from the face of this false pleasure, and see how disgusting is the horrid glare of this sin's deformity. Think ! for ye are intelligent beings ; tremble ! for ye are deathless beings ; feel ! for ye are loving beings ; pause ! for ye are deluded beings ; resolve ! for ye are active beings. See, then, what is the character of this vice, what its extent, what its effect,—and may God enable you to put far from you that which dishonours God, desolates society, debases and destroys man !

But there is the sowing of other seed of evil habits that yields to multitudes of our working men an abundant crop of misery. His mind having never been awakened to the taste of true pleasure, from internal intellectual gratifications, the operative seeks, in external indulgence of the sensual appetites, and the immoderate, unnatural and unprofitable excitement of the passions,

those enjoyments which he thinks necessary to his very existence. To frequent some low theatre, where the most abandoned miscreants are represented as heroes worthy of admiration ; where religion, morals, laws—are made the subject of coarse witticisms ; where crime is construed into exhibition of courage, and disobedience and disorderly conduct magnified into nobleness of spirit, and high-minded resistance of oppression ; to have the ears polluted by the ribaldry and obscenity of some low concert-rooms ; or to have the cheek flushed, and the spirit stirred, under the violent declamation of some club-orator, depicting the wrongs under which his deluded hearers are persuaded to believe they suffer ;—all this may become necessary to the happiness of the unhappy operative—and all this is fully furnished to the diseased appetites and depraved tastes of thousands round about us.

The moral atmosphere that such men breathe is laden with the subtle poison which is continually issuing from the mouths of men who, tainted themselves with every mental and moral malady, breathe out their pestilential principles in the midst of but too susceptible listeners. The jaundiced eye sees evil in that which appears to the healthy vision of his wiser neighbour, beautiful and benevolent, and wise and good. Until our neighbours of the labouring-classes have learned to know that happiness originates within them—in self-respect, self-control, and self-amelioration ;—until they have been made to feel that—

“ The mind is its own place, and in itself  
Can make a heaven of hell—a hell of heaven.”

Until they thus see and feel, they will—they must, be the prey of many disturbing anxieties, the dupes of many disappointing promises of good, the victims of those enemies of their kind who find, in the ruin of their fellow-creatures, the materials and opportunities of their own aggrandizement.

Many a crushed soul—many a wounded spirit—will be found where the hectic excitement of demoralizing amusements may give the outward symbol of the freshness of

moral health and peace ; and while the mocking laugh of intoxication startles the observer's sober ear, it dies away in the desolate chambers of the drunkard's heart, into the low and thrilling moan of speechless agony. The wise and benevolent laws of the Eternal God cannot be outraged with impunity. Shame and sorrow are the concomitants of sin ; and they that " sow the wind shall reap the whirlwind." As the man of philanthropy looks at the degrading customs of his fellow-creatures, he feels, impulsively, spring up within him, the wish to be the means of elevating, comforting, blessing, beings whom he pities as sufferers, and loves as they are fellow-immortals.

There is a particular species of the swallow-tribe which God has formed for free enjoyment in the open expanse of our atmosphere, and to which He has given wings of great length in comparison with the shortness of its legs. Such a conformation teaches that it was not intended to nestle on the low flat surface of the ground, but to rest, after its ærial wanderings, on some point of eminence, whence it might easily commit itself to the support of its congenial and familiar element. Now and then, however, it happens that in the pursuit of its prey, or from some mishap, such a little wanderer in the blue expanse of air, seems to forget its proper position, and settles on the dusty level of some common highway. Vain are all its efforts to regain its lost position—fearful are the injuries which it inflicts on itself in its violent, fruitless efforts to ascend—and sad is the aspect it presents when, with soiled plumage, it lies a picture of helpless fallen misery. How happy he, whose friendly hand should form a little platform whence this forlorn thing might regain its liberty, shake off its defilement, and again put forth its proper powers!

Just thus, we conceive, it is with the unhappy beings whose peculiarities we have been describing. He that first formed them in wisdom, constructed them with wondrous and happy powers, by which, on the wings of thought and observation, they might enjoy life in a higher, purer, happier medium than the other orders of merely irrational things. True it is that they were made *for contact and communion with material things ; but it*

was thus, only that they might again expatiate in the wider, nobler field of mind and heavenly intelligence. How, alas ! is such a being fallen, when, by vile condescension to earthly things, by foolish association with worldly cares, its heavenly powers are crippled, its native beauty soiled, and it wounds itself in vain and foolish efforts to undo the evil it has brought upon itself. Such, however, is a degraded besotted man—and how proud the honour—how sweet the satisfaction—how unspeakable the benefit, when a fellow-creature is allowed and enabled, of God, to be the means of ministering, in the smallest degree, to the elevation, the emancipation, the happiness of such fallen fellow-creatures.

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## CHAPTER II.

### ON THE MANUFACTURING AND OTHER WORKING-CLASSES CONSIDERED AS HEADS OF FAMILIES.

IN this consideration, we advance in the order of influence which the working-man exercises on society at large, and endeavour to ascertain what are the peculiarities of the little governments that exist under our cottage roofs, and how they amalgamate in the larger circle of our national empire, and create harmony or confusion in the one great sovereignty of the King of kings. It is well that the working-classes should be led to view themselves as thus responsible and influential in their relationship to the whole family of man. He who orders his household in accordance with the laws of his God, and with a steady eye to the best interests of his children and his race, is as honorable in this fulfilment of his duty, as the mightiest monarch that ever filled a throne. The Great Monarch of all, to whom "all space is but a point, all time an instant, and all knowledge an *idea*," cannot be diverted from the intrinsic beauty and *qualities of actions*, by the minor distinctions of high and

low, great and small, which, by their tinselled glitterings are apt to distract the attention, and prejudice the opinion of man as to the merit of particular conduct. He that, by grace, has been taught to rule himself, and then, in love and wisdom, rules his house, he it is that acts out the purposes of his being, and rejoices in the favour, and partakes of the blessedness of his God.

While, however, the question is one of deep interest to society at large, it is one of peculiar importance to the working-man himself. If there is one spot on earth where purer pleasures, and more continued peace are found than another, it is a rightly constituted *home*. This sweet word it is that causes the rush of happy feeling on the soul, and unlocks the hidden store of memory of the past. A household is the symbol by which the church of Christ, in all its happy union, its endearing linking of spirits, is figured; and home is that by which the delights of Heaven are described, the pure perennial pleasures that are at God's right hand for ever more. Well may he be degraded to whom his father's home brings no idea of happiness; and truly pitiable is he who cannot look upon one fireside scene, round which the best feelings of his heart are wont to nestle, when they have failed to find a resting-place on the thorny sprays of an opposing unfeeling world. Wherein, then, is it that the working-man too often errs in his home relationship? Are there any causes that tend to destroy his home's happy influence?

A few suggestions, kindly offered, may, by God's blessing, be of use here. In reference to the circumstances under which the marriage contract is entered on, there is much to be reprobated, much to be amended. Whatever tends to lower the wife in the estimation of her husband, or husband in the estimation of his wife,—whatever seems to render the matrimonial union one of *expediency or necessity*, rather than the spontaneous mingling of loving hearts,—this has a direct, a powerful and lasting influence in marring the matrimonial peace. It is to be lamented, as a crying sin, it is to be deplored, as the sure source of unhappiness, that *purity before marriage* is



so frequently forgotten amongst our working men. The frequency of the illegitimate births, the fearfully low estimate of the character of the crime of fornication, the prevailing sentiment that all past injuries to the individual, to society and to God, are amended by a *tardy, and too often a reluctant, marriage*,—this, of itself, is evidence of a very low state of moral feeling, indicative of a retrograde movement as respects civilization, and productive of manifold evils to the entire body politic.

Matrimonial happiness, to be genuine and lasting, must be founded upon love,—but love that is grounded on esteem. Savage man may deem his wife a slave, but civilized man counts her a companion,—the sharer of his sorrows, the increaser of his joys. Hapless she who first enters a husband's home, a tainted, self-condemned, and self-aborring thing. What *innocence* might have asked, and readily have received, from a husband conscious of its worth, that *guilt* implores and weeps for in vain. There are few hearts on which virtue in a wife has not a powerful influence; and there are few homes in which the *bitter recollection of guilty weakness* does not recur, in the dark and gloomy hour of affliction, to add its crushing weight to precipitate the fall of the tottering fabric of family peace. Thus, the natural tendency of this crime is, disunion and dislike, while the blessing of an all-seeing God is withheld from households that are set up by such an act of sin. In this respect, we believe, there is great guilt resting on our operative population. The national conscience has become seared under multiplied instances of this sin; the extent, and apparently irremediable character, of the evil seem to have prostrated every effort at amendment; the evil is left to accumulate, and the ears of those that hurry on in the ways of iniquity are but seldom startled by the warning voice. Yet is this a branch, and an important one, of the great subject of reform, in which, as Christian, patriotic, and benevolent men, we ought to feel an interest, and take a part. No false feeling of delicacy should prevent us from exposing and reprobating this crying crime. It is a festering sore on the body politic—a

worm, that preys upon the very heart of our national prosperity, and gives to it its drooping sickly look. While the head may be gold, the heart silver, the loins brass, and the legs iron, —yet, will the image of our national glory be but unsteady and insecure, while its feet are part of iron and part of clay—while the foundation on which it rests consists of materials that, by juxta-position, do not blend—and by union do not mutually impart strength. But while purity should be considered of paramount importance in every instance in which the lives and interests of two immortal beings are linked together for life, there are also considerations, of a *prudential character*, which should engage the serious attention of those who are expecting happiness in a new and a common home. The *character of the dwelling* in which the family happiness is to be cherished—the *amount and quality of the furniture* by which the comfort and respectability of the dwelling are to be increased—the *source and adequacy of the income* out of which the wants of the household are to be provided for,—these all should form subjects of thought, and be matters of preliminary arrangement with every working man who proposes to gather round about a hearth of his own, all the happy, hallowed associations of home.

The mind is insensibly affected by exterior things; and the influence which neatness, cleanliness, comfort in the household exerts on the tempers, feelings of the inmates, is seldom sufficiently attended to by our working-classes. The prudent wife, by due attention to the neatness and cleanliness of her own person, the orderly behaviour of her children, and the air of comfort which her cottage wears, does more to secure the affection, elevate the character, augment the satisfaction—aye, and improve the morals of her husband, than any superficial observer may imagine. Wisdom, while it regards great ends, is not neglectful of the least things that tend to advance those ends; and prudent is she who, while exerting all those means which she possesses to retain love, yet is equally careful to remove everything that might induce disgust.

Peace rarely abides long in a polluted dwelling ; and Love too often retires in disgust from homes where his pure pinions would be soiled by the filth that is allowed to accumulate. A matter, then, of great importance, is the character of the dwellings of the poor. These, to the disgrace and degradation of our country, have been grossly, glaringly, grievously inadequate, uncomfortable and unhealthy. Inadequate to such a degree are these dwellings, in the mass, in town and country known to have been, that the existence of demoralization is scarcely to be wondered at. How can there be the maintenance of that modesty which is the mystic bond by which society is linked together, when the very dimensions of the dwelling necessitate an intermixture of the sexes at which nature recoils, and virtue hangs down the head.

Lord Ashley, at the annual meeting of the " Society for improving the condition of the labouring-classes," July, 1849, said : " Every day confirms me, more and more, in the conviction, that, the state of the poor, as regards their dwellings, lies at the root of nine-tenths of the evils, and forms nine-tenths of the obstacles which stand in the way of effective improvement. It is to no purpose that you devise schemes, and establish institutions for the reformation and improvement of the minds of the masses, if you leave them in the wretched abodes in which we know them to spend the greater portion of their lives. . . . I myself have had no slight experience on this subject. I will state to you what I have seen with my own eyes, and leave you to infer the possibility, or rather the impossibility, of any social improvement under such circumstances. I have seen, not in one or two, but in more than fifty instances, and in a single town, when I devoted from seven o'clock in the evening till two in the morning in perambulating that town in company with the police, as many as *thirteen or fourteen persons* together in one room or cellar, cold, dark, damp, and miserable. And when, at a later hour, I visited this wretched place, I beheld as many as *seven persons crowded into one bed*. Now, what must

be the condition of such a state of society? To what purpose, I would ask, do you send the minister of the Gospel, the missionary, and the district visitor? To what purpose do you invite the children to your national, your Borough-road, and your Ragged-schools, if, after their period of education, during the day, you send them back at night to visit those scenes of infamy, and be exposed to the temptations, annoyances, and disgusting sights which there are rampant? I hold this to lie at the very root of all the mischief which prevails.

This, perhaps you will say, is an exaggerated instance. I am sorry to say it is a very common evil—an evil which affects all our great towns.

Dr. Southwood Smith, on the same occasion, said, "I have always believed that the houses of the poor exercised upon their lives a *moral* as well as a *physical* influence; but of the extent of that influence I had no knowledge until I saw them removed from those dens of filth, and placed in habitations, which it is no abuse of the term to call *houses*—in houses capable of being converted into *houses*. Then it was that I saw the true nature and the full magnitude of the good that was done after a few months' residence in these superior dwellings. I observed a complete change in the appearance and character of the residents—a change not merely in bodily health, but in a higher state—in a moral and intellectual point of view. An instance of this came under my notice, and made a deep impression on my mind. It was that of a family, not of the poorest or least cultivated class, but belonging to the class of skilled labourers. The man was intelligent, very industrious, and had always maintained his family in comfort. Misfortune befell him, and he, together with his family were obliged to leave their comfortable house. They were driven into a back street—into a filthy and close court in that back street. They went into one of the so-called houses of that court. What was the consequence? The words of the wife to me were these, 'We felt the bitterest part of poverty to be, the wretched

house in which we were doomed to live. My husband had been fond of reading, but he *never opened a book after he entered that house*. He lost all power to work. I thought our ruin was then complete, for his *very mind seemed to be gone*. He could no longer design (his trade being that of a paper-designer), and I saw nothing but ruin before us. He chanced to hear of these buildings (model houses erected by this society). We came to see them; new hopes sprung up in our hearts. We have now been here six months. The day we entered these rooms my husband became a new being; he began to read; he began to design; he set to work; our prosperity returned; we are now perfectly well off, for my husband has obtained a situation of confidence and trust in a large establishment, and *I have not been so happy for many years*.' Is this a solitary instance?" the Dr. goes on to say, "I appeal to every one here whether this case be a solitary history, save only in the *good fortune of its end*. Is not that state of depression, that mental aberration which I have described, the inevitable result of living in such places?"

For the truth of these statements, every one conversant with the cottages of labourers, both in agricultural and town districts, can vouch. How often in country parishes is the eye offended by mud hovels of the poor. Constructed of the most perishable materials, they are the abodes of filth and wretchedness. Their clay floors, on which the water stands in pools—their low ceilings—their rudely patched windows—give an air of cramped confinement. Ill-drained and ill-ventilated, they impair the physical health, and prohibit the expectation of comfort to the labourer as he returns wearied with the work of the day. His home loses all attraction, and in sullen silence, or peevish petulant impatience, he gives himself up to despondency. And filthier, fouler still, sometimes are the habitations of the manufacturing operatives. Packed closely together in low and retired streets, surrounded by the refuse of a crowded population, they stand as physical and moral pest-houses. At rents *often enormously extravagant*, visited but seldom by the

indifferent proprietor, their thresholds crossed by no stranger but by an unfeeling agent, these miserable structures enclose within their baneful walls the crowds of wretched beings that wage an unequal war with disease, and penury and despair. Can we wonder that the wretched inhabitant, whose outward frame is secretly worn down by the poisonous atmosphere he breathes, the din of squalid children that stuns his ears, the sights of desolation and discomfort that meet his eye, is tempted to stimulate by intoxicating drink the drooping faculties of mind and body, and drown in the deadly cup the memory of his many, his accumulating woes? Need we be surprised that the wretched mother, doomed all day to dwell in the midst of misery, which she once perhaps set all the powers of a mother's energy to surmount, should at length give way before her accumulating difficulties, and sink into the soulless, thoughtless, reckless slattern that lolls idly at an equally wretched neighbour's door, or cowers hopelessly over the dying embers of her dirty hearth? Can we blame, rather than pity him, if the husband prefers the sparkling fire on the clean hearth of the neighbouring ale-house (where he is greeted by the ready welcome of his fellows in wretchedness to a brief reprieve from the distractions of his home) to the coldness of his own fireside, the upbraidings of his poverty-stricken wife, and the clamours of his ill-tutored, half-starved children?

There is something that sickens the thoughtful man's heart as he contemplates these abodes of misery; there is a voice of woe which rises up to high heaven from these sinks of impurity, which calls down judgments on the head of those who make their gain out of such sties of wretchedness. Surely this is a strange state of things in this noble, this wealthy, this luxurious land of ours. Surely here is an evil which the hand of humanity, the authority of legislative enactments, the strong arm of justice, should combine at once to abolish for ever. Disease and death luxuriate here—noble souls are crushed here—minds, that under better circumstances might have been cultivated to the exercise of noble thought—the

conception of high designs—a meetness for an inheritance with the saints in light—lie here in the mire of sin, under the bondage of corruption, intellectually, morally, spiritually dead, and by anticipation enclosed in the putrid charnel-houses of so called homes. A brighter day, we trust, is dawning on our operative poor in this respect. Even selfishness is roused, and mammon relents, while charity cries aloud, and Christianity goeth about doing good. Often, far too often still, the young operative has but a selection of the least-miserable abode, where all are wretched; but it may not be without some good result that we attempt to impress upon such, the importance of due reflection as to the character and situation and furnishing of the house he proposes to inhabit, and to suggest, that every exertion on his part to promote the cleanliness, the ventilation, the drainage of his abode, tells most certainly, most effectually, though unperceivedly, on the health, the happiness, the prosperity of himself and his.

But supposing the required improvements in the cottages of the poor to have been effected, or the judicious selection of an abode to have been made by the working-man, still there are other evils discernible in the class, which demand the consideration and require the exertion of himself. The question of the *necessary amount* and *considerate expenditure of income* next comes under review. There is much want of wisdom and prudence amongst our operative fellow-countrymen in respect of both these matters. We conceive that no man is justified in incurring the responsibilities and expenses of a family who has not, at least, some well-founded expectation of the means necessary to their support. To rush into difficulties which himself and his partner might mutually agree to submit to and endure, while objectionable in the light of wisdom, and dangerous as the avenue of temptation, might yet have some shew of justification, when considered as self-supported submission to self-imposed suffering; but he that *brings* the long list of evil which penury entails, upon *his helpless offspring*, is sinning against the first princi-

ples of nature ; and for the momentary gratification of his own selfish wishes, is bringing woe on the children to whom himself gave being, and opening out fresh avenues by which sorrow may wound his own wretched heart.

Yet is there much of this folly, and consequent misery, amongst our working-men. Marriage is hastily and wantonly entered on by those who have scarcely yet acquired the power or opportunity of providing for their own wants. The picturings of hope, in such cases, soon are brushed off by the stern realities of life, and discontent, murmurings, and upbraidings take the place of the happiness which too sanguine, foolish, and inconsiderate passion had promised. The irregularities of our mercantile, manufacturing, mining, and agricultural markets necessitate, doubtless, fluctuations in the amount of our working-men's wages ; and instances, not a few, might be found amongst our capitalists and producers—where due consideration is not had to the comfortable maintenance of those that depend upon them for bread.

These things are evils which it may be difficult, and require the existence of a higher tone of principle and feeling, to modify to any large extent, or to remove entirely. Avarice will still grind the faces of the poor, and the "hire of the labourers who have reaped down their fields, which is of them kept back by fraud," will still cry ; "and the cries of them that have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth," against him "that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work." Still, there is much room for complaint at the imprudence which, in too many cases, marks the manner in which the poor man's means are expended. Lessons of household economy need to be taught in many a workman's dwelling, and prudent forethought needs to be inculcated where recklessness now abounds. It were well that instructions should be given to those who are to be the mothers in our cottage homes, as to the character of the duties that await them.



Something on a small scale has been attempted in our industrial and other schools ; and we believe that those who are receiving the improved, rational, and elevating education which is now ministered in so much larger amount amongst our operative poor, will be an ornament to society by-and-bye,—and restore order, peace, contentment, competence, where disorder, disunion, discontent, and poverty abound. Still, there are many points to which the working man's attention should be called. Her home is a mother's natural and proper sphere ; and wherever her civilising, soothing, beautiful influence is unknown, evil must ensue. Let then this subject engage the serious attention of us all.

That system which requires and effects that the wife of a household shall be removed for a lengthened period from her family, in order that by her individual labour at a distance she may contribute to the supply of the family wants, that system is *politically wrong, socially injurious, morally bad*. Who knows not, by individual, dearly-cherished experience, the sweet, the holy influence of a mother ? She moves in her little sphere, the happy centre round which the finest tendrils of her children's hearts are twined. It is hers to turn the first bubble of infant thought into the right, the happy channel, before the swellings of prejudice and passion have given them the mighty force before which the moral bulwarks fall that are designed to dam the current of their headlong violence. It is hers to bend the yet ductile will, before the growth of age has stiffened it into obstinacy. Hers to mould the still pliant clay, before it has become hardened by exposure to a scorching world. He then that makes it a matter of high resolve, of mighty effort, to provide for the wants of his household without taxing the out-door labours of his wife, is a wise and a prudent man. He will reap the fruit in the happiness of his home, and the sweets of the consciousness of having, in this respect, done his duty. No doubt, cases and circumstances may and must arise, in which this sacrifice of a mother's superintending care must be made ; but it *should be felt that it is a sacrifice, justifiable only on the*

*score of stern necessity.* Much thoughtlessness and recklessness, we feel, exist on this point; but economy, self-denial, self-exertion, should all first be tried, before the mischievous alternative be adopted.

It were a noble work in which employers might engage, would they but lend their weighty influence in warding off this evil from the families of their dependents. The grateful operative, we believe, would nobly respond to this act—call it not of justice, but of humanity. There is to be found, in some men's minds, a notion that the working-men are ungrateful. On a long and intimate acquaintance with vast masses of them, we cannot, dare not, but declare our strong feeling that this is a wicked calumny on the class. The poor man's heart leaps responsively and rejoicingly at the word of sympathy, and the quivering lip, and faltering tongue, and filling eye, tell how sensibly he appreciates the delicate act of kindness at a brother's hand. They are naturally a noble race, and rarely have neglect, and tyranny, and misery, and poverty combined, succeeded in crushing out of the poor man, those noble, generous sentiments which are the ornament of the soul. Here, then, let it appear that his wealthier fellows desire his comfort; let him know that they have learned that *his comfort is perilled*, when a mother is worn out in body and in spirit by a ten hours' drudgery in a factory, or a still longer toil in the open field, and that they are anxious to afford him help.

How many a sickly, ricketted infant pines under this unnatural system—wails out a wretched life of discomfort and disease, and then drops into an early grave. Oh! that the fathers and mothers of our land would look into the smiling faces of their own darlings, and while the feeble cry of some poor man's child comes into their ears from the knee of careless, feeble age, to which, in its mother's wretchedness, it has been consigned, they would rise to one mighty effort, and send forth one loud, earnest, sustained, and merciful voice that the evil shall exist no longer. But even where a mother's presence graces a poor man's home—a mother and a

father's prudence must husband and apply his means. There is a mode of procedure, but too common amongst our labouring classes, which evidences, at least, the unsoundness of their judgment, if it does not even go to impeach the goodness of their hearts. It is this.—A false notion prevails, that as the husband is mainly, if not solely, the earner of the wages by which the family lives; so there should be set apart a portion of the family income for *his own individual comfort* and gratification. It is not an unusual thing to see the father of a family rejoicing in the decent, often expensive, Sunday suit, while his wife and children retire from the sight of their better-dressed neighbours, by reason of the scantiness and shabbiness of the apparel in which they would appear. When the husband's wages are barely adequate to provide for his family's wants, the shilling or two must still be taken from their little store, to allow him to procure the amusements or the indulgence which he thinks he has a right to ask.

Now this is utterly wrong and mischievous, unfeeling and unfair. There should be no "mine and thine" in so strict a union as that which "family" implies. Every, the slightest, improvement of circumstances; every, the smallest, accession of comfort should be felt and shared by all. There should be no unseemly prominence either in weal or woe; but those who have wept should alike rejoice together. The husband should feel himself identified in everything with his wife and children, and should think himself to be disgraced, even by decency, when his wife and children remain in degraded condition and appearance. Let our operatives be taught this salutary lesson, and wretch indeed is he, who seeing its force and admitting its wisdom, will yet allow his selfishness and his self-indulgence to bid him still despise it. But prudential suggestions stop not even here. We often find amongst our operative brethren a grievous carelessness as to the proportioning of each day's income to each day's wants. For the first few days of the week there is often *real*, and still more frequently *comparative* extravagance of *expenditure*; while deficiency, amounting sometimes

almost to starvation, and supplied only at the most fearful sacrifices, characterizes the day or two before the weekly wages are received. A skilful equalization of the manner of living, would oft-times, if not always, remedy this.

Where the total amount of food procurable is but far too small, there may and there must be great difficulty in providing that the scanty store be not immoderately taxed, when the craving appetite still asks for what is yet within reach. We feel convinced, however, that in many instances actual extravagance exists, and in every case the amount of suffering would be lessened by prudent, though painful, self-control. Then, again, the system of pledging goods to meet every temporary want of funds is a ruinous one indeed. In some households this is a plan had recourse to weekly. The weekly bundle, containing frequently the husband's Sunday suit, or some articles of apparel which may be dispensed with during the six working days, finds its way to the pawnbroker's shelves regularly at the beginning of the week, often without the husband's knowledge, and in far too many instances to provide funds from which may be furnished the means of gratifying the evil propensities of the wife. This is a fearfully rapid means of eating away all that was intended to maintain the family comfort and respectability; and when once this sad habit has been formed of meeting a present emergency, or a fancied necessity, by this virtual squandering of the household means, ruin and poverty must soon ensue.

Better far were it, we conceive, to sell than to pawn the article of which the value in money was required. Some caution might be exhibited ere the property were allowed to *pass altogether* from the owner's hands, though little compunction or hesitation might be felt in transferring it as he thought *only for a time*. Such, and many might have been added, are the suggestions which we would offer to the working-man on the subject of the source and expenditure of income. We would now point to a fruitful and far too much neglected source of household joys and fire-side satisfactions, the care and

education of his children. In manufacturing populations, especially, this is a very momentous matter, not only as it affects the character, comfort, and success in life of the offspring; but also as it concerns the comforts and the very support of the parents themselves. It is a marked and continually growing feature in the manufacturing system, that adult, and especially aged hands, are continually giving place to younger and nimbler operatives. Each improvement in the construction of machinery does away with the necessity of the application of adult strength.

The delicate and complex operations of these triumphs of mechanical skill require only in many cases, that careful attention which the young can give, and consequently parents find that their own occupation being gone, they are dependent, often for a long period at the close of life, mainly on the exertions and earnings of their children. To cultivate, therefore, in the early life of their offspring, the higher and better feelings of the heart—to promote sobriety and respectability of character—to identify the child with its home as the spot endeared by the thousand instances of parental solicitude, and beautified by the memory of many hours of loving intercourse between the father and his children—all this will tend to promote the happiness of the parent's declining years. His offspring thus trained, thus taught, so far from counting it a hardship, will deem it a sacred duty, to admit to a share of the comforts which the labour of his stronger hands may yield, those who so often, so generously, so readily ministered to his wants, and patiently bore with all his waywardness in his own early, infant days.

But, besides providing for future emergencies, the parent who bends to the training and improvement of his own children will reap a reward of present satisfaction in the very engagement itself. There are few feelings that pass over the heart of a right-minded parent with a purer sweeter rush of delight than those which flow from the observation of artless unfeigned affection in his child. The *sparkling little eye that grows brighter at his return to his*

happy home—the merry sprightly note of welcome, and the officious haste to mix him up in the occupations and amusements of young, and guileless, and loving hearts, this greets the husband pleasantly as the sweet exchange from the noise and discord of his daily toil. There are a thousand happy employments to be found within doors, by one who determines to make his home the centre where his influence must first be felt. He that turns away indifferently from the contemplation of the difficulties, or observation of the happiness of his household—he whose heart melts not under the softening influences of his own family—he it is who rudely snaps asunder the delicate ties by which even nature would wish to bind his soul to order, peace, and love; and small wonder need there be, if such a one be found to run recklessly to riot and so rush rapidly to misery.

To be conversant with the gradual opening of young minds—to watch the growth of intellect—and to regulate the course of youthful passions—has a soothing, softening, and instructive efficacy. The thought is turned to mental and moral subjects; and the mind is put into a train which, by exhibiting unlooked-for pleasures in unexpected connexion with the cultivation of the intellect and the heart, destroys the necessity, and then does away with the habit of seeking satisfaction solely in indulging the appetite of sense. Happy will that workman be, who, on entering on the duties and responsibilities of a household, shall be enabled to make and maintain a firm resolve that his first duties, and his purest pleasures in his leisure hours, shall be found in and drawn from the circle of his own home—and wise will he be who, on reflecting on the confusion of his own household, the ill-estate of his children, the propensity within himself to seek his enjoyments beyond his own threshold, shall see in such an unhappy state of things the consequences of his own folly, and shall set himself to check, modify and remove the evil, by individually, perseveringly, and self-denyingly expending his thought, time, and strength, on the regulation of his own household.

## CHAPTER III.

ON OUR MANUFACTURING AND OTHER WORKING-CLASSES,  
CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THEIR EMPLOYERS AND  
THEIR FELLOW WORKMEN.

GREAT alterations have taken place, within the last thirty or forty years, in the position and the condition of our working-classes, both in agricultural and manufacturing districts. In the former, the comparative situation of employer and employed, has been greatly altered. In many parts of the country, the class of small farmers, whose lands were cultivated chiefly by the tenants' own family, aided by one or more farm servants resident in the house, has been fast disappearing. The centralization of the manufacturing operations in particular localities has rendered unprofitable, and, by consequence, has abolished the little hand-manufacturing in which the time of this class was once partially engaged, and by which was eked out that slender provision which was derived from the imperfect cultivation of an insufficiently small plot of land.

Farms have been united, capital and science have been applied, and they who once were employers have now become the employed, while the farm-servant finds in a cottage of his own, that the distinction between himself and his master, which, at the time of which we speak, was scarcely to be discerned, now has become marked, and wide, and permanent. The change, doubtless, as that which has occurred in manufacturing districts, was inevitable as commerce extended, population increased, and ingenuity was stimulated. It has resulted, also, in the fuller development of agricultural *and manufacturing skill*, and the gradual increase in the

nation's wealth. Still its effect has been that the situation of the working-classes has been altered, and there is suggested to the working-man the necessity of considering, and adapting himself to, the changed position he occupies, rather than of looking back repiningly after what he thinks the better state of the former system, and longing hopelessly after the impossibility of its return.

In manufacturing districts, the change has been, and is, daily becoming more marked. The man of limited means contends, at a great disadvantage, with his more moneyed competitor. Large establishments in which all the varied operations, from the raw to the manufactured material, are carried on, gradually absorb the more partial and less extensive operations of the poorer opponents—and thus, crowds of workmen are gathered under the employment of one great master, that were wont, in other days, to be parcelled out amongst the smaller productionists. This, as a consequence, has necessitated the interposition of foremen, overlookers, and agents between the master and the bulk of his men—and has, no doubt, given rise to much hardship and tyranny from such officials—while it has also lessened the probability of a successful appeal to the conscience and feelings of the master. He sees, and hears, and acts, too often, through the medium of his confidential servants, in whose character he may sometimes too much confide.

A strict and impartial supervision of all his dependents, a kind and ready attention to the representations of the mass of his work-people, on the part of the employer, would tend much to remove the heart-burning and jealousy that are felt by the classes under review. Instances might, undoubtedly, be found, in which tyranny and persecution, and the insatiate love of money, on the part of the master, provoke the deserved indignation of those who earn an inadequate pittance in his service. But the instances, we believe, have been multiplied, the grievances magnified, and the bitter feeling of dislike unnaturally and unduly deepened, by the mischievous representations, the wicked exaggerations, of designing and ill-disposed agitators.



We would say to the working man—Do not allow your attention to be drawn from your own individual circumstances, to the continued contemplation and passionate reprobation of evils that you are persuaded to believe exist elsewhere. It is a common evil in the conformation of discontented and unhappy minds, that they look about for defects in other systems, rather than acknowledge the advantages, and thankfully accept the privileges, of that with which they are themselves more immediately connected. It needs but skill in the representer, and ignorance in the listener, to find out imperfections in the best system; and a man whose thoughts are continually exercised in the contemplation of those faults which are said to be found in the establishments of others, need not be surprised to find evils arise in his own—referable, perhaps, not so much to the cruelty and injustice of his own employer, as to the less diligent, uniform, and willing attention to his own duties as one of the employed. A workman should avoid, until oppression renders it imperative, entertaining unworthy notions of the character and the intentions of his master. His position unfits him for a due consideration of all the difficulties under which his master labours, and the motives from which he acts. The manifest discontent and evident dislike which the workman exhibits, *embitters the bad, and perplexes and pains the good* master. It is a very painful state of things, when suspicion takes the place of confidence and esteem; when the employer sees amongst his workmen those who care little for his interests, but who are imperious and cringing by turns, as their own advantage suggests; or when the employed regard as a hard and unfeeling tyrant him whom it is their misfortune that they are compelled to serve.

The constant change of service to which such a state of feeling gives rise, acts unfavourably on both parties concerned. The master receiving continued successions of new servants whose characters he cannot know and respect—and whom he treats, in consequence, with a strictness which he conceives his ignorance of them justifies, and attention to his own interests necessitates—is

apt to become unfeeling, void of all interest in, or consideration for, the comforts of those who may leave him to-morrow, or use the privileges they may have gained to foster opposition and to multiply unreasonable demands. The workman, on the other, at each fickle change, rather loses than gains; regards character not so much a consideration, and sinks to the level of the many rather than make a praiseworthy effort to gain a position of respectability and worth by those qualities which are likely to make his services more desirable and more desired.

On looking into the different establishments of our merchants and manufacturers, and considering the condition of their servants, we conceive it would almost uniformly be found, that length of service is usually found to be followed by superiority in the comforts and confidential character of the employed. He, then, whose unhappiness it may be to be placed under a severe master, would do well, first, to try whether, by integrity of conduct, respectful behaviour, and conscientious observance of his employer's interests he may not succeed in recommending himself to notice, and, in his turn, merit favourable attention and adequate support.

It is wickedness in any man to generate, and folly in any working-man to encourage, entertain, and cherish the idea that the interests of the master and his men are opposed and distinct—that the employer is, and by his very position and interest must be, ever on the look-out for opportunities in which to oppress and injure the working-man—while the latter is justified in making reprisals, by taking every means and occasion of extorting from the necessities of his master what he has ceased to expect from his justice or his kindness.

Painful experience, we believe, proves that, in such an unequal contest the workman must be defeated. The varied combinations in the manufacturing districts to enforce a higher rate of wages—the turn-outs which, a few years ago, were so common—will be found ever to have terminated most disastrously for the working man. They have called into action mechanical ingenuity—by

which wealth, when attempt has been made to coerce its possessors, may dispense, more and more with the service of workmen, who cannot be controlled, by the substitution of machinery that will do its bidding.

Trade's unions, we conceive, though rendered necessary by the painful peculiarity in the relative position of employer and employed, are indications of imperfection. In the necessity which originated them they are to be lamented—and in the evils which attend the manner of their management they are to be deprecated. Practically, in too many instances, they give a premium to idleness, extravagance, and unsettled and migratory habits. The dissolute workman recklessly casts from him the opportunity and the service in which to earn an honest livelihood, and wanders from place to place in professed search for employment—but in reality, to gratify a truant disposition, and lead a life of idle infamy at the expense of the more sober, careful, and deluded of his fellow-craftsmen. The adventurer and the unprincipled feed on the ill-afforded contributions of the honest and industrious; while it is at least questionable, whether any real advantage has accrued by any ultimately successful effort to benefit those whose subscriptions may be-taken their dependence upon the scheme—while their deteriorated condition evidences that it has issued in no very marked good. Wiser he, we cannot but declare, who shall commit the surplus, which he can now afford to give to the union he is connected with, as a saving's-bank deposit, to be a provision in days of difficulty or times of trouble. Such a one would not be mocked by disappointment of the hopes which his credulity had generated, and would find out the practical wisdom of the system he had been induced to follow, in the genuine store which the period of adversity demanded.

High wages cannot, we believe, be maintained, in the long run, by any combination for the purposes of compulsion. The sustaining power, in such a case, is unnatural and awkward—and it were well if a healthier, more constant, plan could be found out to issue in the *desired result*. Doubtless, faults may be found on both

sides ; and we cannot but feel that employers have much for which to answer before their heavenly master if, while they have been heaping to themselves riches, and adding field to field, their poor dependants—by whose hard labour they have been enriched—have been pining in penury, shut up in the darkness of mental, moral, and spiritual ignorance.

The relative duties that exist between master and servant are not changed, or done away altogether, by the *multitude of the latter that the former may see fit to employ*. If for his own aggrandizement an employer collects, on a large scale, the responsible immortals that need to be trained for happiness and for heaven—he ought, we conceive, in duty to provide, in a *proportionately extended measure*, the agency by which their moral training is to be effected. Here there has been, in far too many instances, great and grievous neglect, and in consequence, there has sprung up in most manufacturing and mining neighbourhoods a class of men, ignorant of the first principles of duty to God or man, fretted by the galling annoyances of a petty tyranny, and at last goaded on to impassioned, unfeeling acts of brutality and violence. This very violence has, in turn, only aggravated and confirmed the evil, which it was designed to overthrow and remove. Warned by the excesses of tumultuous operatives, employers conceive themselves justified in cold suspicion of the class—and even kind and considerate, and honourable men are persuaded, that a degree of rigour is needful in curbing the rampant passions of their excitable and unscrupulous workmen. We believe, that in all such movements, in which the servant would coerce his master, they who really are oppressed, those who deserve redress and—in the majority of cases, by fair representation—would receive it, are *not those who are most prominent and conspicuous in the movement*.

There are to be found, in connexion with every large body of sufferers, men who take the loudest part in the cry of distress, but are far from feeling the greatest weight of its burden. Amongst the gangrenous grievances of the working-classes, these men find their proper

nutriment, and they swarm in seasons of excitement and popular commotion. Now the workman's cause is often estimated by the known character of these designing and disreputable men. The hand of sympathy is timidly held out, lest it should be clasped by the palm of villany—and *conscious guilt* in the master who has been suspected of oppression contrives to fix the honest man's eye on the *villany of the poor man's advocate*, that he may thereby turn it from his *own delinquency and the righteousness of the poor man's cause*.

It must be by elevation of the character of the operative class, that their real, and substantial, and permanent improvement, in their condition as employed, will be effected. Tyranny cannot exist over an enlightened and a virtuous people. It ever finds support, and draws evidence of its necessity from the weaknesses or the vices of its victims. It is a parasite which derives life and health and growth, from the age and decay of the tree whose strength it exhausts, and whose nutriment it abstracts. While then, on the one hand, we would call loudly, in the solemnity of a message from God, to every employer of his fellow men, that he is bound to provide that his dependents are furnished with the means of physical, intellectual, and moral health—still, we would, in the language of real interest and deep sympathy, implore the masses of our operative fellow-countrymen to look to the increasing respectability of the character of their order—their greater concern for, and conservation of, the interests of their employers, for the possession of that moral force before which all the fetters that oppression and tyranny would throw around them would be as the green withs upon the giant's arms.

Masters would soon discover that it was to their advantage to give their countenance, and the weight of their influence, to the rising respectability of this interesting class. They would feel that the consolidation of the once unsettled elements out of which their prosperity springs, was only the formation of a more substantial foundation on which the security of their prosperity, and *the well-being* of the nation, should rest. It is no

respectable man's interest to foster misery, and its consequent discontent. The greater a man's stake in the country's wealth, the greater will be his anxiety to secure the country's quiet. It is he who has nothing to lose, but everything to gain, to whom popular commotion is profitable and congenial. Like the little petrel-bird, he is ever abroad when the foam is thickest, and the billows of agitation heaviest, and the gale of passion fiercest. He is at home in the storm, and busy in the confusion of uproar,—and why? The petrel is never stunned or daunted by the clash of conflicting elements. While alarm disturbs the mariner trembling for the safety of his noble vessel, on which his fortune and his life depend, this little lover of confusion is busied in the pursuit of its own prey. The agitation brings its food within its reach, by casting it out from a lower depth—and it feeds luxuriously while others faint, and rejoices exultingly in circumstances where others tremble.

Agitators are the petrels of popular storms; and while those who have something to lose are in earnest, they with clever wing avoid the surges that might overwhelm them in the gulf that yawns beneath their dupes, and coolly profit by the occasion to swallow their much-loved prey. Their appearance, even, is portentous; and wise is he who, on witnessing the quarter on which they begin to show themselves, shall at once turn the helm of his own career, and seek for peace and safety on another and widely different tack.

If, then, there should appear amongst a body of operatives one or more whose fluent tongues should strive to widen the distance between the master and his men, by inflaming the passions, and exaggerating the grievances of the latter—or, by harsh and rash statements as to the grasping avarice and unfeeling tyranny of the former—let every prudent workman think, the petrel's crop is empty, its food is scarce, and it is snuffing the whirlwind from afar.

It were well that the right-minded, the respectable, should separate themselves from these restless spirits; and thus, while they wipe away the scandal of enormities

committed in their name, and professedly to secure their rights, they would present a phalanx of moral strength which no unholy alliance of evil masters would be able to crush—and lift up a voice of manly, sensible, virtuous indignation, which would reach the soul, and evoke the energies of an oppression-hating nation. Let, then, the workmen combine—not to awe and intimidate their masters—not to squeeze the reluctant advance of wages from the cold hand of avarice—but to elevate their own moral tone—to enlarge their own information.

Now, in order to this advancement, there is much caution required as to the character of the intercourse that exists amongst the working-men themselves. Example has a powerful influence, either for good or for evil; and where great masses of men come into daily contact, they affect each other very markedly; and rise and fall according to the general tone of manners and conversation prevalent amongst them. An individual of vicious habits, propensities, and feelings is usually busily employed in contaminating and degrading his fellows. He turns into ridicule their lingering efforts and desires to maintain a moral rectitude and respectability of character, and, in a thousand different ways, maliciously attempts to sap the foundations of better resolutions, and to cast reflections on their better principles. The drunkard is loud in his glowing descriptions of the exciting pleasures of the last night's revel; and generously, as he thinks it, strives to win the sober from the routine quietude of fireside joys, to the clamour and rude mirth of the tavern's common room. The profligate laughs at the meanness of spirit, the narrowness of soul, which have regarded the holy happy restraints of modesty as sacred barriers, which it were villany to attempt to throw down. The wails of the widow's anguished heart, when her daughter has become the prey of licentiousness,—the drooping, shame-covered face of the wretched victim, whose heart is stricken as she looks round on the mourning family that her fall has tarnished in its once bright purity, the spirits which bleed inwardly from *wounds that wanton wickedness has inflicted, and which*

no human skill can staunch—these, the wretched tempter forgets, or keeps concealed; and while he fans the embers of desire, and poisons the springs of the heart, and blunts the keenness of the conscience, he chuckles fiendishly at the moral and physical ruin which he sees advancing under his hellish arts. The scoffer and the blasphemer exercises his wicked invention to give an air of proud scorn to all his allusions to matters that have passed for heavenly verities in the better-tutored mind of his unhappy confidant. He lifts the veil presumptuously from the holy mysteries which a mother's pious care, perhaps, had inwoven into the very fabric of the memory. He sneers contemptuously at what he calls priestcraft, mum-mery, methodism—and would dexterously ply his art, that what he calls the dupe of a gloomy enthusiasm may come out from the damp, dark, comfortless cell of superstition and bigotry, into what he would represent as the broad sunny noontide light of reason and of nature. His language proves that he has daring enough to throw off the restraints of a mean submission to the behests of Heaven; and his actions show that his heart is even yet blacker than his tongue describes it.

Thus do the evil rise early and late take rest in the propagation of their mischief-making principles, their peace-annihilating practices, and far too often in the lewd and blasphemous conversations, and coarse and sceptic ribaldry of the common workshop, do we learn how effectively the work has been done, how fatally the leprosy has spread.

If, then, our working-men are persuaded that the elevation of the moral tone of their class, is preliminary to and productive of the general amelioration of their order, as to position, comfort and moral weight, they should learn wisdom as to the manner in which the blessed work should be attempted, from the tactics which their wicked fellows employ in the inculcation or that which deteriorates, debases, and destroys. Each right-minded operative should view himself as sent into the workshop as well on a work of faithfulness to his employer, as also on a mission of mercy and faithfulness



towards his fellow operatives. His stern look of offended modesty should check the boisterous but coward braggadocio of the heartless debauchee—his serious, and solemn, and manly voice should silence the flippancy of the self-conceited scoffer at holy things—and his solid, sensible, scriptural arguments should brush away the cobwebs of the shallow sophistries by which the short-sighted sceptic would impugn the realities of the truth of God. Order should ever have him on her side—decency should be invited to screen herself from the insults of the licentious under the protecting shield of his ready defence—innocence should recognize in him a champion and a pattern, and error should be made to skulk into its familiar and congenial darkness before the uplifted torch of his enunciated truth. He should regard himself as leaven cast into many measures of meal—as a faithful servant of his God and of his king in the midst of many despisers of both—as a moral scavenger engaged in promoting and perpetuating the health of his species by clearing away those disgusting heaps of moral impurity which diffuse far and wide their baneful, their murderous miasmata. It should be his to admit the oxygen of truth amongst the vitiated atmosphere under which his fellows droop—his to introduce the limpid water of right principles where impurity, discomfort, and disease had been accumulating from its scarcity—his to uncloud the bright Sun of righteousness, before which the miserable substitutes of human wit and human reason might pale, and the *ignis fatuus* conceits vanish, which the slimy swamps of infidelity had generated. His own pure vigorous thoughts should be made to take their manly massive stand, and put to shame the deformed crudities, and sickly sentimentalism of intellects that sin has dwarfed. He should feel the spirit of a Luther impelling him to the establishment, under God, of a glorious reformation at which the dumb (morally) shall speak, and the deaf hear, the lame leap, and the dead revive.

## CHAPTER IV.

ON OUR MANUFACTURING AND OTHER WORKING-CLASSES  
CONSIDERED AS THE SUBJECTS OF AN EARTHLY  
SOVEREIGN.

WHILE these classes have rights and duties in their relationship to those on whom more immediately they are dependent for the opportunities of earning a livelihood, they have also such in their relationship to society at large—in their position as members of the great body politic. Our inquiry into their condition would be imperfect, if we did not take into consideration this feature of their position, and point out the circumstances to which their own and the nation's attention should be drawn in this respect also.

It is a mark of enlightened political wisdom to consider that the aggregate prosperity of the entire body social is secured and advanced by the healthy development of each individual member, and in the due subordination of all its varied parts. That the "whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself," is an axiom which holds good no less in social than in spiritual things. A family is a nation in miniature—a nation is a family extended—and *political* differs from *parental* discipline only in degree; *national* are but the expansion and amplification of *family* laws, and both to be wise and equitable must be founded on and regulated by the holy, and just, and good laws of the King of kings. Family preferences, in their unfairness and their infelicity, represent the injustice that is done, and the evils that spring

from the improper attention given to merely sectional interests, and the undue partiality shewn to the peculiar benefit of a class.

The observation of these principles of political economy, and the uniformity and justice in which they are acted out, indicate advance of wisdom, progress in civilization, and approximation to legislative perfection. In the infancy and inexperience of social communities, these great truths are little understood in theory, and as little carried out in practice. Where mere force is the foundation and sanction, and tyrannical caprice the exponent of national law, there liberty pines, and vigour droops, and comfort sneaks away. The history of our own country would illustrate the truth of these positions; and a comparison of our privileges, as a nation, in contrast with those which our forefathers enjoyed, will teach us how much reason we have to be thankful for the improved position we hold. Now, to no class have the improvements in our political system come with so rich a blessing as to the *lower orders of the community*.

Selfishness might promote the amelioration and aggrandizement of the higher ranks; but it was the growth of enlightenment, and wisdom, and charity, which first pointed out the necessity, the justice, the practical good of elevating, and emancipating, and blessing the poor. Sagacity taught, what love should have suggested, that the diseased member impeded the advance of the nation by its swollen disproportion, while it corrupted the health of the nation by the noxious secretions which returned from it into the system. Thus Expediency conceded, as opportunity offered, what Wisdom should ever seek opportunity to offer and secure to right. As the nation, therefore, has become wiser, the poor have become happier; and the light which has become shed broadly over the land, while it has added radiance to the great, has disclosed and brought out in higher relief and bolder distinctness the once forgotten interests, the little appreciated importance of the comforts of the operative and productive classes.

Under the feudal system, which the Norman con-

queror introduced, the workman was a slave. His condition was scarcely superior to the cattle, along with which he was bought and sold. The iron-collar, by which his neck was dishonoured, was but the outward visible link of those mental and moral fetters in which his spirit crawled. Now, indeed, how changed !

If there be one blessing richer than the others which civilization has conferred, it is liberty; and in no country in the world has this noble tree taken deeper root than in our happy England. Like our native oak it has gradually insinuated its extending roots and coiled them round the very foundations of our political glory, and whatever shall *overturn the one will also uplift the other*. Our national stability and our liberty are thus bound together for good or for evil. My working fellow-countrymen, see here a ground of gratitude for the privileges of your very birth. The poorest man's cottage is his castle, and under the broad shelter of equal laws, and before the mild gravity of even-handed justice, the simplest can feel himself secure when he knows himself to be innocent. Freedom that is *talked about* and *applauded* elsewhere, is *felt and realized* here. She is a coy and sensitive daughter in the national household. When she finds herself pointed at and persecuted by an applause she hates, she is apt to retire and suspend her happy labours for the family's good. She is most at home when she is allowed to mix herself up with every little incident of the family's history, loved and valued of all, but *loved quietly*, not *boisterously caressed*, not *extravagantly applauded*. Here she has been long at home, and in even the smallest department of our national economy we see evidences that her delicate and graceful hand has been at work. She stands on the very margin of our sea-girt isle, and the very first that greets the stranger as he lands on our happy shore, is *liberty*. She gently puts forth her hand, and at once all the restrictions which caste, or colour, or creed imposed drop off from the visitant to freedom's great metropolis.

Thought, and speech, and action are emancipated here ; the pent-up sigh of unexpressed wrong finds vent here ;

the muttered murmurings against Oppression are no longer counted a crime, but are heard in the opened ear, and vindicated by the unparalysed arm of Justice. Under the mild influence, then, of this their birth-right, let our working-classes be persuaded to consider their position as members of the body politic. Let them, however, guard against the habit of examining such a question in a disposition to find occasion for blame.

It is the peculiarity of everything that is to be traced to the wisdom, and contrivance, and skill of man, that it is and will be full of imperfections; the plans and works of God alone are they that exhibit new beauties the more deeply they are examined. The finest muslin that ever issued from a loom appears but as coarse sackcloth under the magnifying spell of the microscope, and the needle of most exquisite polish and most delicate point is but as the rude and blunted wire; but whoever discovered coarseness in the texture of an insect's wing, or want of polish or sharpness in the sting of a bee? As the works of man, then, all our social regulations should be regarded—as those which, though not exempt from objection in every point of view, are yet intended and calculated to subserve the best interests of the greatest number. This blemish-discovering spirit, also, though it may suit the purposes of those who luxuriate in misfortune and thrive in the midst of disease, this is, after all, indicative of a shortness of mental vision, and productive of mental misery.

I thank not that man who, by the application of powerful magnifiers, gives to my eyesight a greater strength than a wise Creator intended it to possess,—and so causes me to see corruption and loathsomeness in that which was designed to be, and otherwise would have been, to me wholesome and agreeable food. My enlarged vision makes but a poor recompense for the nausea which it originates; and my emptied stomach piteously cries out against the modicum of questionable wisdom which has been thus put within my head. We read in ancient story that the gods, as they were called, in their anger against a certain race, sent amongst them a set of

winged monsters, called Harpies, which visited them whenever they sat down to table, and polluted, by their filthy touch, that which should have been for their nutriment and delight.

Now, the Harpies of our social economy, are our political-abuse-mongers. Their aim and delight it is to turn the eyes of our people on the cracks that appear in the venerable buttresses of our constitution—the weather marks of a ripe antiquity which appear on the walls of our citadel—while they studiously avoid putting the thoughtful investigator in that proper point of view whence the massive grandeur and the beautiful proportions of the entire fabric would appear. Like an unskilful artist, such men, while they paint in their own gaudy, glaring colours the particular features whose importance they have been led unreasonably to estimate, forget the keeping of the entire portraiture,—and for the masterpiece of artistic skill which the fathers of our country have left us, they would present to the immediate ridicule of observant nations, and the eventual disgust and dislike of their own miserable dupes, the wretched caricature of their own depraved taste, and still more wretched execution.

With these preliminary cautionary observations, we proceed to the consideration of the subject immediately before us. Now, there are three words which have, of late, been emblazoned on the banners of our political demagogues : Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. These are put forth as the great blessings which are to follow to our working-classes as the assured consequence of the principles which their so-called friends profess, and the plans which their wisdom propounds. Let us beware, however, lest we mistake names for things, and delude ourselves by expectations which will not be realized, because we have entertained notions which are confused and ill-defined. In every organized assemblage of men in social order, liberty is essential to their comfort, their real greatness, their mental and moral development. Shut out from its pure light, and unvisited by its holy atmosphere, the most vigorous and promising plants become bleached and

fruitless things. The pressing hand of tyranny stunts the growth of its wretched subjects, squeezes out the energies of its hopeless victims, and then mocks and insults the misery which itself has made. At such a state of things, every patriot's heart recoils; and against the introduction of such a system—either upon himself or his fellows—every soul that has tasted freedom's healthy, bracing draught, must struggle, protest and pray. But *License is not liberty*. Liberty supposes law:—it implies the free scope for individual thought and action; but *only to the extent that it shall not trench upon the equally valued, equally just rights of others*. License places the good at the mercy of the bad,—liberty removes all restraints which might prevent the bad from reaching the higher elevation of the good. License sighs for impunity,—liberty would promote impeccancy. License would stand by, and see the land become as “the field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the man void of understanding,” “all grown over with thorns,” until “nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down:”—Liberty, on the other hand, would do the work of the diligent husbandman, and remove the weeds that would choke the growth of that which was to prove the garden's ornament, and the vineyard's wealth. Liberty, therefore, is ever identified with law,—but law, that is the happy offspring of light and love.

Now, let our workmen look well to this. That they have grievances to complain of, may be true; but may not the method by which they would remove them be such as would entail more and more mischievous grievances on a greater number, and such as might, eventually, only aggravate and confirm their own? When, in a nation like our own, so many interests, so many rights, are to be considered,—much intelligence, much experience, much cool and dispassionate prudence are needed in him who would regulate the vast, the complex, the delicate machinery of the state. Modifications even, that are ultimately good and wholesome, yet need to be judiciously and cautiously effected. We cannot sweep off even existing abuses, without, by our rash precipitancy,

running risk of pulling down, at the same time, something that is valuable and useful. Let, then, those who are urged to disaffection and discontent, and cozened by the cry of clamorous advocates of change—reflect, whether, they are competent by position, education, and observation, to comprehend the entire case in the system they are forward to blame, and anxious to repair. The history of nations teaches us, that the tyranny which is most oppressive and unfeeling, is *the tyranny of ignorance*; and the evil is only aggravated when the tyrant-power is in *the hands of the multitude*—as their very number only destroys the sense of *individual responsibility*. Despotism never yet inflicted evils so many and so malicious as those which *lie at the door of anarchy*,—and men have ever been found to rush madly back from the clutches of the *licentious misrule of a multitude of masters*, to the comparatively milder arms of *the tyranny of one*. That people which, after violent oscillations between these extremes, shall at length find rest in the happy medium of a constitution like our own—that people has found a solid and stable basis, on which the noble fabric of a nation's glory and greatness will eventually be constructed.

The recent results in France of the foolish violent struggles after so-called liberty, should speak with a warning voice to the common sense and the best feelings of our operative fellow-countrymen. On whom has the blow fallen most heavily in the late sanguinary disturbances of that wretched land? We think there can be but one reply;—on the working-classes. Commercial credit suspended, manufacturing energies paralysed—have cut off at once the means of support to ten thousand operatives. The political charlatan may hope for political importance in the uproar of civil commotion—the aristocracy and gentry of the nation may lose their luxuries, their dignity, their social quiet, and fire-side safety—but the workman has *lost his all*,—his very sustenance is gone, and black despair haunts him whom false hope had foolishly flattered and betrayed.

Peace is essential to commercial, and manufacturing,



and industrial enterprize ; the workman's welfare, as to worldly things, is dependent upon the extension and vigour of this enterprize ; therefore, should the workman love peace. What harasses, and disturbs, and degrades the other members of the community ruins him ; and though the destruction which disorder deals may eventually reach every other rank, it begins with that of the working man. If ever there were a period in which our operative fellow-countrymen should feel thankful for the glory of our English constitution, it must be when they contrast their own happy peace and safety with the confusion which drenched the streets of the French metropolis with the best blood of their own noble order. If ever there were a period in which lessons of political wisdom may be largely and profitably learned,—surely, it is now, that the fearful tragedy which their own eyes have seen, and their ears heard, is presented as the sad commentary on the false lessons which they had heard with but too willing an ear. That such feelings *have been generated*, and such lessons of wisdom inculcated, by the recent revolution, in many a workman's manly heart, and on many a thoughtful reflective mind, we conceive we could furnish abundant evidence to prove.

The hollow, specious cry of liberty has lost something of its witchery ; and practical men begin to compare, with scrutinising eye, the promises with the performances—the practices with the principles—of their so-called champions—their flattering and vapouring friends. But our operative friends are told that they are unrepresented in the legislative councils of the country ; and universal suffrage, annual parliaments, paid representatives, etc., are propounded as expedients for giving them their proper weight and influence in the nation ; and they are taught that, till these things are, they are deprived of their rights, and have their liberty curtailed. Now, we would just suggest that, as a general rule, he that cannot control himself, and so regulate his own affairs as to promote order in his own household, and secure his own respectability in the class to which he belongs—can scarcely be considered a competent person to control the

destinies of his country, regulate the management of the family of the nation, and elevate the country of his birth to honour amongst the political societies of the earth.

There may be, and will be, instances in which misfortune or oppression may bring into poverty and affliction an operative who is competent to the due discharge of his duty as an elector ; yet, to comprehend this small class, it were folly indeed to open wide the door by which the mass of the irresponsible and the unscrupulous might rush in, and bear down the wiser and more conscientious decisions of the wise and the good amongst us. Surely, the ability to rent a £10 per annum cottage is not too high a guarantee which the state demands of the prudence, and diligence, and ability of one to whom it gives a voice by which the proceedings of the mightiest empire in the world are to be modified and directed ? Such, only, may indeed be expected to have extricated themselves from the influence which authority might exercise for evil purposes on still more dependent poverty ; and from such only, could we reasonably expect, as a rule, that consideration would be exhibited which would enable them to depute to proper and prudent representatives, the high responsibility devolving on them as electors.

The wise, the good, the careful of our workmen have nothing in our representative system to exclude them from the franchise—which is safe in such hands ; and to all such as possess not these qualities, except, of course, to those whom misfortune has depressed—and who form the exception to the rule—the great body of the nation has a right to say, and exercises a wise discretion in saying ;—“ The interests of this great country are things too sacred, too momentous, to be committed to unworthy hands. Character will usually secure the position to which we have confined the electoral right, and the same character alone fits a man for its due and conscientious discharge.”

Such regulations, of a cautionary and prudential character, are not a deprivation of right, and a diminution of liberty ; they are the test that such right would

be used in subordination to the general good,—and criterions that liberty, in such instances, will not be prostituted to selfish and unworthy ends. Their effect should be (and, when the whole matter is fully considered), will be, to stimulate and encourage all who appreciate the importance, and acknowledge the responsibility, of the electoral function, to put themselves above the line, below which, in the estimation of the community, electoral unfitness or unfaithfulness, in general, are to be found. We believe that, to a great extent, this is felt and known amongst the working-classes. The grievances of which we are wont to be told they complain, are chiefly *pointed out to them*, rather than *discovered by them*, as far as their political position is concerned. And the murmurings which, from time to time, reach the ear of the social body, oftener are *imputed to* than *expressed by* them; while the whisperings of disaffection are heard only because there are ever round about them those that are but too well pleased to prolong and reduplicate the sound, until it assumes the hoarse clamour of popular discontent. They are, as a class, eminently loyal, grievously misrepresented by their clamorous and prominent champions, and egregiously misunderstood by the superficial observer, and the timid alarmist. They gradually are becoming able to distinguish false from faithful friends; and, in spite of the provocations they have endured, and the deprivations they have felt,—and notwithstanding the contaminating and deceitful literature that sends forth amongst them its fearful exaggerations and its hollow fallacies, our working-men have learned, in the sobering school of experience, to *discriminate*.

Faction cannot fan a flame any longer out of materials that have lost their *ready combustibility*—because they have exchanged the *flimsiness of superficial examination* for the *stouter, tougher, and more durable texture of solemn conviction*, grounded on a sounder judgment of facts.

He that *preaches liberty*, while he *manifests his contempt for law*, is likely, now-a-days, to have his *motives scrutinized*,—and had needs have some *cunning*, and *more caution*, if his selfishness be completely covered by

the cloak of philanthropy by which his public appearance is graced.

But another pet-word by which the public ear has been tickled, is, *equality*.

Has there been any misconception or misinterpretation here? That, in *some respects*, all men are equal, is a weighty and a consolatory truth: that, *they are equal in every respect*, or were intended to be so—the great fact of their observed condition, and the thoughtful consideration of their known constitution, as loudly and unequivocally declare *to be a great mistake*. They are equal, as to their responsibility, sensibility, immortality; they are equal, as to their dependence on, and support from, a higher—even an Almighty power; but that they are, or were intended to be, equal as to social position, intellectual development, or moral growth, it were the merest folly to affirm.

The relationship of rich and poor, weak and strong, high and low, learned and unlearned, wise and foolish, governors and governed is as uniformly recurring as that of father and child—and is as much a law of our condition, in the *system of mind*, as the relationship of sun and primary and secondary planets is a law of the *system of matter*. In this diversity, we see the beauty of the Divine Author's resources of wisdom; and how that by the cultivation of the creature's mental and spiritual endowments under so great varieties of position, the glory of his great Master will be illustrated by the beautiful and harmonious combination of so many distinct excellencies; while the unity and concord of the family of man will be secured by the needful interchange of so many exhibitions of mutual benevolence and a common necessity of mutual good offices. But we find men point to the magnificence and the luxuries of the rich, and contrasting them with the degradation and distress of the poor, they ask, "Ought such distinctions to be?" We answer, "Such distinctions ever have been, since

"Man's first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the world and all our woe.

“ And such will ever be, spite of all legislative enactments, and schemes of human wisdom—

“ Till one greater man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat.”

Were all distinctions of condition, rank, and wealth, removed to-day, they would exist again to-morrow. The idea that the earth is the common producer of the common stock from which the necessities and the comforts of each individual man are to be derived—that property is injustice upheld and perpetuated by violence—this will be found to be *practically untrue*, and in operation would be *positively unjust*, or most *perniciously injurious*. The stock produced as the aggregate means of man's support, is not *the spontaneous offering of the earth*, but the result of the combination of labour and skill on the part of man acting with God's blessing on the yielding earth. *Compulsory labour* were in defiance of the principle of *complete equality*; and that the idle should participate in the fruits of the labours of the diligent *were virtually the establishment of a privileged class*, whose indolence was sanctioned and perpetuated, while their injustice was not the less because it might be traced to stubbornness in determination not to work, rather than to a haughty desire to reach a proud pre-eminence. The one presents the idea of one who *must be carried* because *he will not walk*, and knows he *cannot be left behind*—the other that of one who *will run on before*, and cannot be overtaken, and thus comes in for a longer pillage and proportionately larger share of that which was given over as a common spoil.

Theories like those which some would put forth as the principle on which equality is to be grounded, can surely find countenance only amongst those who love to lose themselves in vain speculations, when they ought to be heeding the great realities of life. There is a painfully impracticable feature that some men's minds present, which is sometimes dignified by the name of a *desire to return to first principles*. Such men, *when the fit is on them*, fall into a kind of philosophic reverie, and

while their neighbour's house is on fire and their own threatened, cannot be persuaded to move hand or foot to prevent or remedy the evil except upon some strange plan which is at length only ready for execution when the ashes of their home tell them that it is now no longer required. The most provoking part in the character of such dreamers is, that after they have done all they could to impede the efforts of others, they begin immediately to find out instances of indecision or imperfection on the part of those that were devoting their best energies to meet the difficulties of the present and pressing evil—nay, that they even still continue to attempt to prove that their plan and their principle would have been alike proved to be excellent, but for *some jealousy on the part of their opponents* that deprived them of the fair opportunity of trial. But it will be said, unnecessary inequalities must be confessed to exist. True, but they cannot be remedied by wrong, and if property is a right to be defended alike for all, it is not by compulsion that the equalization must be made. The rich man is fearfully responsible for the due discharge of his duty in respect to his wealth, but it is the workman's duty, and it should be his pleasure, to owe to his own industry, under God, the means of provision for his family's wants. Did he consult his real peace, he would look rather at the comfort he is possessed of than at the greater blessing which he flatters himself his richer fellow-creatures possess.

The real truth is that happiness is often in the inverse ratio of a man's possessions—and the poor man, could he take his wealthier master's place, would discover that gold cannot make a breast-plate to ward off the arrows of anxiety—while a peaceful breast may be found but slightly covered in by a poor garment. It is *the balance in hand* which constitutes *the real amount* of possessed happiness, and this may be as great when arising from balancing the little reckonings of the poor, as when exhibited by adding up the weightier cares and crosses, and setting them against the more numerous sources of gratification which the wealthy have. God in his good-

ness " tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," and by his Fatherly care, it happens that the heavy burden is easy to the sturdy shoulders while the lighter weight is oppressive to the weak loins. Each has his load to bear to *remind him where he is*, and each has his ministered comfort to *tell him whose he is*. He that refuses the latter because he complains of the former, is like one who withdraws the air from the interior of a glass receiver of an air pump, and so practically *doubles the weight of the atmospheric pressure*, and causes the glass to be shivered to pieces. He has disarranged the order of a wise God, by which *internal elasticity resisted external pressure*, and the integrity of a fabric which in itself was brittle was thus to be preserved. So does foolish discontent act by the delicate construction of inward peace.

Besides, in forming our estimate of equality, the question of habits, feelings, taste, must be considered. The man that considers merely the gratifications of sense, —that thinks of providing merely or chiefly for the animal part of his constitution, cannot understand how exquisite is the pleasure arising from the *cultivation of mind*, and how keen is the mental hunger when the intellectual food is withdrawn. Such men are not to be gauged by any uniform standard. The differences of their position cannot be measured by any mere mechanical instrument. They live at different elevations; imbibe an atmosphere of different rarity; and no balance can be struck between them by any political regulation. Their distinctness is palpable, after every effort to identify them; and they seek different ways as soon as the restraint is removed, which gives them an outward uniformity. The same remarks apply, as respects the idle and the industrious, the profligate and the prudent. Give the former what he might deem his share, in the common distribution, and you *aggravate his particular weakness*; give it to the latter, and you *unstring his energies*, and diminish his disposition and his ability to do his duty.

We see this constantly occurring in cases where *unexpected sums of money fall*, by bequest or otherwise, into

the workman's hands. He ceases to labour, time hangs heavily on his unoccupied hands. Perhaps he seeks, by the means put within his reach, the indulgence of his passions, and terminates his career a hardened drunkard, who might have remained sober, because poor. At all events, when his store has been expended, labour has become irksome; and his household bears marks unmistakeable, that his comparative riches paved the way to his bitter, helpless poverty. Still, we cannot but feel, that the working-classes have oft had, and perhaps still have, cause to complain. How sad, and unwise, and unjust, was the system, under the old poor-law, by which the labouring-classes in agricultural districts—as, for instance, in Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, etc., were systematically *pauperized*; and how lamentably defective is the system still, when in some parts of the country the young men are, almost of necessity, urged to poaching, etc., for lack of employment. Here is a kind of oppression which the united voice of the nation should demand to be abolished. But the cry of suffering which is most eloquent, is *that of suffering worth*; and fruitless would that attempt be which would intercept the sympathy of an enlightened people from the groanings of an oppressed and a virtuous population.

The entire aspect of our times would prove, that the condition of our working-classes is forming one great and special subject of investigation; and as far as legislative interference can be brought to bear upon their amelioration, that interference will be called for and applied. But there are evils in the social system which no enactments can touch, but which will disappear only under an elevated tone of public morals, and before modifications of a gradual nature.

The British Constitution may be compared to one of our own noble men-of-war. A nobler sight the invention of man has not been able to present. Her very look has majesty, and as we see her noble bearing, and watch her as she opens out her snowy canvass to the breeze, we feel that whilst she is glorious in port, she is grand in the clash of elemental war. While in peace she



captivates the beholder's eye with her beauty, in war she claims the confidence of his heart by the manifest adaptation she exhibits for the defence of all he holds dear. Still, her very bulk and might makes her proportionately unwieldy; and while lighter craft, that would go down in the hurricane of uproar, and the shock of conflict, can tack more readily than she, to pick up a "man overboard," she is beautifully constructed so as to adapt herself to all great events, though she may seem unfitted for the relief of particular disasters. So is it with our glorious constitution. It has proved its worth in many a political storm, when lighter and clumsier barks have foundered—and we would not now be persuaded to undervalue it, when the distant mutterings of the coming gale seem to give warnings to all political systems that their strength is again soon to be tested. Rather let each be ever found at his particular post; and remember that in working the great vessel of the state, freighted with so much that we all value, "England expects that every man will do his duty." Let this be our political motto; and from the false notions of a political equality our working-men will turn and see that *order* is a *nation's*, as it is *heaven's*, first law.

But the third word that sounds in the operative's ear, who listens to the harangues of those who have political nostrums for every species of social ill, is *Fraternity*. This, under a sound of hallowed tone, insinuates a notion of a most dangerous character. If it were intended, by this term, to remind the working-man that he is one of the great family of man, and so enlarge his conceptions, deepen his sympathies, and stimulate his efforts to promote, as far as in him lies, the best interests of all his brethren—then it were worthy of a patriot's inculcation, and deserving of the sincere attention of all thinking men. But it is much to be feared, that by such a term a more terrible idea is conveyed. The workman is taught to consider his class in the light of a younger son, who has to complain only of wrongs inflicted by the more favoured heir, and whose interests constantly clash with those of a brother that scarcely

deserves the name, and that has forfeited all right to the affection which the name implies. Its tendency is to induce the operative part of the community to fraternize as it has been called,—to unite and combine, and contend against the other hostile members of the social family, and extort from the fears, what they no longer expect from the justice or the love, of men who seem to think them but their dependents and slaves. Such fraternity is fraught with mischief to the whole national family—it is unfastening the happy tie of charity, which is the bond of perfectness, and making each section of the community lack that strength which is the result only of the combination of them all. “The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee : nor, again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more, those members of the body which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour ; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need : but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked : *that there should be no schism in the body*—but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.”—1 Cor. xii. 21—26.

How strange would be a combination of the ignorant against the educated, and of the educated against the ignorant—of patients against physicians, and physicians against patients—and how strange, and prejudicial to all parties concerned, are the combinations which range employers and employed—governors and governed, in deadly hostility, or cold suspicion against each other. If such estrangements and animosities exist, it is the bounden duty of every lover of his country, every benefactor of his race to use his influence to put them far away. How mischievous, who malevolent are they who endeavour to widen the existing breach, and trample rudely under foot the flag of truce which those who unhappily have been estranged now mutually unfurl.

It is painfully offensive to every lover of order to observe how many are the unholy arts by which this is sought to be effected in embittering the spirit of our working men. When periods of difficulty arrive—when seasons of stagnation, or peculiar local misfortunes come—(and such, our more sensible operatives know, must and will come, in spite of all our political and mercantile regulations)—at such time, O how guilty and how unkind is he to his working fellow-men, who shall embitter the cup of poverty and suffering by untrue or untimely descriptions of the extravagances of the rich. When at such times his attention is called to the so-called exorbitant incomes of the royal household, the salaries of the great officers of state, of the judges, or the ecclesiastics of the land, let the operative be persuaded that a snare is set before him, and that they who thus would get him within their toils, would soon leave him with one other malady added to his many woes—viz., an envious and discontented spirit. It is the true fraternal spirit, which shall pour in oil when a man sees interests clash, and heat generated, by the friction of the different parts of which the machinery of society is composed.

How foolish were the man who on looking at the balance wheel of a watch should say, as he compared it with some of the stronger and less polished parts of the wisely constructed instrument, that there was *an inequality of strain upon the two*, and that the *finish and polish of the former* betokened *favouritism and partiality*. His wiser fellow, who constructed the watch, might tell him that the nature of the mechanism, the necessities of the case demanded the distinction, and that were the several wheels *to fraternize*, combine in never so great number, the effect intended would be destroyed—the beauty marred—the usefulness entirely lost. The delicacy of the balance was intended to regulate the uniform action of the whole, that the ingenuity and practical wisdom of the artist might be illustrated, and the benefit of the purchaser consulted.

Distinctions must be, and may and should be, without breach of charity, and that is not true fraternity whose

aim and tendency is to generate strife and engender heart-burnings. Let not specious promises deceive, or sweetly sounding names mislead the working man. Equality is to be found in the common level on which men stand as sinners, and the common platform of privilege to which they are raised as saints; true fraternity is their holy brotherhood in Christ Jesus; and true liberty is that with which Christ makes his people free. Whatever, in the regulations of civil society brings men nearest to the condition which these terms thus explained imply—that, in the proportion by which it acts, is beneficial, and so deserving of prosecution. Oh! that some master-mind might be led to grapple with this great subject, and exhibit in all the distinctness of lucidity, and press home with all the zeal and energy and eloquence that the importance of the subject demands the plain truth, that the well-being of the whole is the interest of each individual, and that the harmonious action of all the separate agencies in one combined, continued and accumulating force, is the real secret of the moral power of a great and good community. Oh! that some voice, fervid from the very force of feeling, and loud in the very energy of expostulation, might rise clear above the tumult and confusion with which brother strives with brother, and cry with trumpet-tongued distinctness, and spirit-stirring pathos, “Sirs, ye are brethren.” Then would grievances be stated and redressed from a feeling of unity of interest, and the entire strength of a people would conspire to uphold order, vindicate law, and drive out of the disenchanted land the evil genii of discord and confusion—misconduct and misrule. Sedition would decamp, “his occupation gone”—and household joys, and social blessings would flock again “as doves to the windows” whence they had been scared away by violence, clamour, and confusion.

## CHAPTER V.

ON OUR MANUFACTURING AND OTHER WORKING CLASSES  
CONSIDERED AS THE SUBJECTS OF THE KING OF  
KINGS.

THIS is an important consideration. Hitherto, we have regarded these classes in their connexion with the concerns of time; now we are to look at them in respect of their preparation for eternity. Our subject widens as we advance, and all the finest feelings of our nature are engaged, as we contemplate the condition of these fellow-immortals. We would not, however, seem for a moment to insinuate that this, their last relationship is only one superadded to the others already considered, or that it is last in order or importance, because we have not given it earlier investigation. The truth is, that it is the primary and principal relationship of man. All others imply the existence of this, and are modified, as to the manner in which their duties are discharged, according to the influence exerted on the individual by the recollection of his obligation to the great Creator. Our hope and earnest desire is, that our full view of this interesting branch of our subject may give point and purpose, and add force and fervour to the efforts to be made in elevating and enlightening this interesting portion of the community; and that, as being last presented to the reader's mind, it may longest abide in his memory, and be most continually recalled, as that which gives the purest light by which to view the characters of his fellow-men. It is a part of the subject which is most commonly overlooked. So constantly are the things of time—the concerns of the body—the relationships which exist in, and are confined to, the present passing scene—so constantly and so skilfully are such things presented to the eye, that by their very nearness they intercept the view of greater things beyond. Thus, men who would shrink sensitively, *with the keenest feeling of pain*, from the view of the

bodily suffering of a class—or that mourn sincerely over their ignorance and mental deformities—can scarcely be led to understand the most fearful of all maladies, that of sin. Outrages against the laws of society are seen in their injurious character, while still more gross ones against the laws of God, create but little uneasiness and alarm. And yet is this the true light in which to view the matter. No pruning of the branches will result in beneficial effects, until the root has been freed from those things which corrode it, or limit its due development. Let us, then, endeavour to turn the true light of God's word upon the moral and spiritual features of our operative population, and strive to present them to the eye of their fellow-men as they are seen by the all-seeing and sin-hating eye of God. Here, again, we must limit our contemplation to the specialties of their condition as a class. They partake of the common corruption and natural blindness of fallen man; and bear, along with all their brethren, indications that they are degraded from the position of knowledge, holiness, and happiness which man occupied as created in the image of his God. But there may appear peculiarities which may justly be attributed to their peculiar situation—enormities which the force of circumstances may have fostered or confirmed.

Our remarks, however, must not be considered as universally applicable. We believe that there are, in no other ranks of men, to be found more and more eminent specimens of enlightened and entire allegiance to the Sovereign of Heaven than amongst our working-classes. These bright instances would indicate that there is nothing in the condition of the class, that is actually and necessarily obstructive to their advance in intelligence and in goodness. They are the bright spots on an otherwise unrelievedly gloomy picture—and stimulate the man of Christian philanthropy to “make full proof of his ministry.” They are the examples to which we can direct the attention of our working-men; and serve to teach us, that the “sword of the Spirit” can make its way *to the dissection of the hardest heart, and the truth be*

glorified by its power to illuminate the darkest understanding. Leaving, then, out of our present consideration, those whom the Spirit of God has drawn out of the mire, and with a feeling of gratitude for God's goodness in their case, and of confidence as to His ability to make the humble instrumentality of his servants subserve still greater and more glorious ends, in bringing glory to himself and good to the immortal beings on whom he acts,—we will address ourselves to the consideration of the religious condition of the great masses of our operative fellow-countrymen. There are four sections under which we ought to arrange our thoughts on this subject, viz. :—*ignorance, indifference, infidelity and immorality.*

The condition of multitudes of our operative population, with respect to their ignorance—specially of divine things—is such as can scarcely be credited by those who have never personally investigated it, but is a feature in their character painfully prominent, and the cause of serious apprehension to those who have had the opportunity, the philanthropy, and *the moral courage* to search into their real state. The following statement cannot be read without pain and alarm by any who have the good of their kind, or of their country, at heart. It is extracted from the report of the Rev. J. Clay, Chaplain of the Preston House of Correction, which was presented, in the year 1846, to the magistrates of the county of Lancaster :—

“ No one sees more clearly than the chaplain to a jail, that public education is lamentably imperfect. For many successive years, my duty has required me to lay before the magistracy of the county, statistics of secular and religious ignorance, which, though at first considered scarcely credible, subsequent investigation by other and better qualified enquirers has corroborated. It is not required from one holding my humble position, to suggest the mode of operating on the unformed masses of ignorance ; but I feel that it is incumbent upon me to report facts bearing on the question, and brought under my own observation, which evince the paramount necessity of doing something ; to exhibit, unpleasant as it

may be to all parties, the mere animal existence, it can scarcely be called humanity, which in this civilised and religious country, yet remains uncivilised and without religion. To do this, let me present a short summary of three years' observation ; hard, naked statistics, which I will clothe in but little commentary. During the period I name, the performance of my duty has brought me into contact with—

“ 1733 men and boys, and 387 women and girls, altogether unable to read ; with—

“ 1301 men and boys, and 287 women and girls, who knew not the name of the reigning sovereign ; with—

“ 1290 men and boys, and 293 women and girls, so incapable of receiving moral or religious instruction, that to speak to them of ‘virtue,’ ‘vice,’ ‘iniquity,’ or ‘holiness,’ was to speak to them in an unknown tongue ; with—

“ 1120 men and boys, and 257 women and girls, so destitute of the merest rudiments of Christian knowledge, so untaught in religious forms and practice, that they knew not the name of Him who died for their sins, nor could they utter a prayer to their Father in heaven. Yet for minds like these, who never received ‘the bread of life’ other food has been found. Their appetites, depraved by those who feed them, are abundantly and cheaply supplied with the ‘perilous stuff’ contained in ‘The Newgate Calendar improved,’ the adventures of Dick Turpin and Jack Shephard, and similar corrupting trash contained in ‘Lloyd’s publications.’ I have conversed, during the last three years, with 1234 males, and 199 females, who, though ignorant of almost everything good and useful, and of the meaning of ‘virtue’ and ‘vice,’ have yet been familiar with, if not enamoured of, the personification of the latter, as held up for their sympathies and imitation in the stories of Turpin and Shephard. Public education then is lamentably imperfect, even were it measured by the ability to read and write. *Without* that ability there *can* be no education ; but (which is less considered) *with* it, there *may* be none, or worse than none.



"The acquisition of reading and writing is only the acquisition of instruments by which education may be shapen out; tools with a keen edge, of the greatest value to those instructed in their use, but calculated to do enormous mischief in perverse or wanton hands. Instruction in reading and writing may be carried to a high point without anything worthy the name of education being imparted. There may be no exercise of the perceptive faculties, no cultivation of the judgment, no discipline of the will, no training of the moral sense, no awakening of religious feelings, no instilling of religious principles. No, very often have I found boys and young men able to read fluently the printed characters in the New Testament, though quite unable to understand the sense of what they read. That book, desecrated by the system which makes it a lesson-book, is associated in the mind of the Sunday School child, and of many another child, with uninteresting, mechanical, and difficult labour; with confinement, weariness, and blows. Children are '*put into the Testament*,' as into a hard and barren field, in which they are to perform a piece of useless drudgery, instead of being led into a garden of the choicest flowers and fruit which they have been prepared to admire, and are now privileged to cultivate and enjoy. The tendency to regard the Holy Scriptures as a depôt of taskwork, and the reading or committing to memory a certain number of verses as a meritorious labour, is evident even in prison. To one of these young men I expressed my surprise that though he could *read* so well, he should be so ignorant of what he read. He replied, in a tone of indignation, whether at what he considered injustice or imposition, I know not, 'Why! they never learned me the *understanding* of the words.'

"But this same young man, so uninstructed in the great and vital *meanings* of the Testament, could apply the mechanical faculty he had acquired, the instrument so dangerous when misapplied, to unlock the meanings of other books; he easily comprehended, assisted by coarse but intelligible engravings, the exciting stories of

the 'Newgate Calendar improved,' and of Dick Turpin and his black mare. And so while the Book of Life has never been opened to his understanding and affections, other books, fraught with ruin and death, are made level to his capacity, and enticing to his imagination. If a people such as I have described," the chaplain goes on to say, "so ignorant, so degraded, exposed to the most demoralising influences, but abundantly capable of mental and religious good, were believed to exist in some distant island of the Pacific, our missionaries would be poured upon their shores, and gold without stint would be spent, in the effort to Christianize them. Why are our *home heathens* so long overlooked? Are they less 'benighted' than those on 'India's coral strand?' No, their darkness is the more intense from its contrast with the light. Are their *numbers* too insignificant? *In this county alone there is nearly a million of them!*"

Truly, this is a painful extract—it is a sad testimony to a sad state of things—yet it is not a solitary one, neither may it be regarded as referring to evils that have passed away, or have been considerably modified. The same gentleman, in his report for 1848, mentions, that he required 185 men to write out for him the Lord's Prayer. He says that 60 only attempted it, and of these but one performed it outright, and only 17 did it in a manner that indicated a knowledge of its meaning. He afterwards thus classifies the whole 185 :—

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Well instructed.....   | 1, or 0·5 per cent. |
| 2. Adequately instructed ....   | 4, or 2 "           |
| 3. More or less imperfect ....  | 18, or 10 "         |
| 4. Exhibiting gross ignorance   | 15, or 18 "         |
| 5. " deplorable "   | 22, or 12 "         |
| 6. " a yet lower mental<br>and religious condition—<br><i>home heathens</i> ..... | 125, or 67 "        |

The police reports for the town of Manchester, 1848, show that out of 6277 persons taken into custody, within that year, 2188 could neither read nor write; and 3813 could do so imperfectly; or 6001 were *practically destitute of the means* of gaining for themselves instruction

and pleasure from books. Mr. Redgrave, of the Home Department, in his "Criminal Tables for 1847," also shows that the aggregate of the two classes last alluded to, *i. e.*, of those who read and write not at all, and imperfectly, amounted to a little more than 90 per cent. of the whole number apprehended. Here, then, in the cases where statistical details may be collected, and have been regularly recorded, we have evidence of the fearful ignorance of the lower classes of society. But it may, perhaps, be thought, that the records of our criminal establishments do not furnish evidence applicable to the operatives at large—that these are on a higher level, and must be estimated by a different standard. This may be so, to some extent, and we turn for additional light upon their state to the reports of those who have made that state more particularly a matter of thoughtful and anxious investigation.

The Church Pastoral Aid Society is one of the many important associations formed for the detection, exposure, and, under God, removal, of the spiritual ignorance of our poorer brethren; and from its reports we may draw material information from those who, by position, opportunity, and observation are peculiarly deserving of attention. In the printed report issued by this society for the year 1848, p. 62, appears the following statement, made by a clerical correspondent:—"Certain circumstances induced me to have my district surveyed" (it contained 10,000 souls), "particularly with regard to the state of education. To do this effectually, my Scripture reader was employed for several weeks; and the result of the inquiry is, the discovery that no less than 1,120 children, capable of attending school, are receiving no instruction whatever. The number under instruction is 934; of infants, 721. On remonstrating with the parents for this gross neglect of their children's education, my Scripture reader was met by the usual replies—such as want of clothing, incapability of payment, or the like. These, it cannot be doubted, are in some cases—perhaps in many—the true reasons; but, certainly, not in the majority.

“The real cause is to be found, I apprehend, in the ignorance of the parents themselves, and indifference to the welfare of their offspring; a lamentable proof of the degraded state to which a large class of our labouring population is reduced. I cannot say that there is a want of school accommodation; because, though the schools of the district are well-attended, we are sensible of no pressure. The physical condition of many corresponds with their moral and spiritual state. The houses of some are in a condition not fit to be described. In one small court, the smell was so offensive, that it was not possible to remain long in it; yet it was occupied by sixty or seventy persons. Can we wonder that disease and death should reign in such places? Drunkenness is the prevailing vice; and to supply the demand for strong liquors at as cheap a rate as possible, cellars without licenses, with secret entrances (it is said), are used—where spirits, illicitly distilled, are sold. But it is grievous to learn, that indifference to the education of their children is not confined to such as these. It is found in a large number of persons who are raised above this wretchedness, and who have no excuse whatever for so criminal a neglect. With regard to themselves, having long lost the habit of attending public worship, they pass the Sabbath day in idleness and sloth. The salvation of the soul is a subject foreign to their thoughts. If, therefore, they are so culpable with regard to their own eternal interests, we cannot be surprised that they feel little concern for the welfare of their families; although it must be apparent to them that, in such localities, their children are exposed to every species of vice.”

In the same Society's report for 1849, are the following extracts from the journal of a Scripture-reader, employed in the town of Birmingham, as read by one of the speakers at the annual meeting. Speaking of one of the parties visited, the reader says, “This man is an artist, has been a widower eighteen years, has a sister and two daughters, one of them twenty-one years of age; neither of them have been baptised; said he had often thought of taking them to St. Martin's, but had

neglected it so long, was ashamed, to bring them. He never attends any place of worship; says he finds it necessary to have Sunday for a day of recreation, as he is obliged to work so hard all the week. He spoke much of the Church being asleep; he had lived in the house he now occupies twenty-one years (in the very heart of Birmingham) and *no one had been to say anything about the salvation of his soul.*" From another, the same reader learned that "he had not been in a place of worship for sixteen years." Another, not for nine years;—a third, not more than ten times in twenty years; and a fourth he thus describes:—"I have called many times upon this young man during the past two months, and at each of my visits I have endeavoured to teach him the simple truth of the Gospel; for although living in this Christian land, and within five minutes' walk of the house of God, yet his mind is as dark as though he had been born in a land where the name of Jesus had never been heard; and with regard to his attendance at the means of grace, it appears that he has not done so (unless at a time when with a funeral or wedding) *for sixteen years*; and in this state of heathen darkness he would have died, if it had been left to his own choice."

There is surely a feeling of shame and humiliation before God, as we peruse records like these. Unhappily, the miserable beings which such statements describe, are not few and rarely met with. We meet them daily in our streets, and employ them in the various occupations by which they minister to our comforts, but we follow them not to their homes, turn not aside with them into the bye-streets and alleys where they congregate, in companionship of guilt and of ignorance; and therefore it is that we estimate them partially, and think of them unfrequently.

These spots of spiritual darkness are gloomy spots on the face of our Christian land; here error driven out before the pure light of Gospel truth, retires to shroud *herself* and her miserable dupes in pitchy darkness. The *enlightened* Christian is amazed when he investigates

such men's minds, at their unlooked-for dulness and darkness on the first principles of his holy religion. Men that are intelligent in their occupation as workmen, and quick and alert in anything that would promote the temporal good of themselves or their families;—such men may be found who never opened a Bible, know nothing of the Holy Ghost, are acquainted barely with the name of Christ, but know nothing of His nature or His work; understand nothing of the character of their guilt, regard God as harsh and hard when informed that He has forbidden, and will punish them for, their wicked courses. Multitudes will be discovered to the diligent investigator, whose moral feelings have been so blunted by indulgence of every unholy passion, and daily familiarity with every form of iniquity, that they have lost the faculty of discriminating between right and wrong, except as to those cases in which these two opposites are represented by actions which affect the interests of society. The delicacy of their spiritual discernment is gone in the long and constant contact with the freezing indifference to God which is on every side, and conscience is so benumbed as to be incapable of perceiving the existence of guilt upon it, until it has become a load ready to press its miserable owner down into the blackness of darkness for ever.

The existence of such a class of fellow-creatures, is full of the deepest pain to those who know from experience the elevating character of the gospel of the grace of God, who have felt the pleasure and the peace that its holy truths unfold, and anticipate the portion for which its sanctifying influences prepare. To these, the sight of ignorance combined with guilt, misery unmitigated and unrelieved by any ray of hope, is a sight full of the bitterest agony. But even those who know nothing or care nothing for these higher matters of Christian experience and Christian solicitude, had well look with alarm to this moral deterioration of a class of their countrymen. Under the action of influences that now tell upon them, multitudes of our operatives are retrograding as respects moral culture and spiritual

acquirements. Ignorance transmitted from parent to child becomes the more intractable as we advance in the period of its duration, and physically, intellectually, spiritually, our crowds of untutored operatives are rapidly approaching the confines of barbarism, while they retain the tact and cunning and skill which civilization gives. If this be so, we may well look with anxiety to the future. The clash of conflicting interests will come, and terrible will be the fall of order when its strongholds are assailed by men who hate it because they cannot endure its constraint, and have learned the secret of attacking it with success. Let but the flood of ignorance and irreligion go on accumulating as it has done in our own population for the last half century, and in fifty years to come we should see the fair face of society overwhelmed by a far more devastating and destructive flood than that before which Europe bowed, when the icy North sent forth her thousands of a Gothic race to disgrace and devastate the happy and the sunny south.

But while this moral and spiritual desolation has been allowed to exist, and while the professed disciples of Christ, and the lovers of a pure faith have failed to take possession and cultivate it for God, the enemy has not been equally indifferent in hedging it in as his own territory, and raising obstacles against any future effort that the roused people of God might make. He has dressed up error in the garb of truth and sent her on her wretched mission of blinding the eyes and ruining the souls of men. Various are the disguises she assumes and skilfully does she adapt herself to meet the exigencies of the case on which she has to act. Satan knows full well how to suit the tastes of those whom he would ensnare; and, consequently, we may learn from the very nature of the baits that he puts forth, what is the degree of folly in those whom he expects to secure as his prey. The *popular systems of error*, on this principle, become *the exponents of the amount of the popular ignorance*.

If this be so, we have a gloomy picture indeed

presented in this our own day. Take the reviving influence of popery as a criterion. This is a noxious plant whose very existence and propagation betoken a barren or an exhausted soil—an *ignis fatuus* that appears in the undrained marshes of mental and moral stagnation—an unsightly fungus whose growth indicates that the full vigour of life has passed or is passing fast away from the once noble tree whose beauty it now disfigures. Ignorance is the mother of this antichristian devotion; and it is precisely in proportion to the extent to which the mental eye is darkened, and the spiritual taste depraved, and the true independence of the spirit crushed, that a system so unreasonable, so debasing, so enslaving, as that of the church of Rome can be adopted and valued in a community professedly Protestant. To minds that have never been familiarized with the great truths of vital Christianity—to hearts that have never loved God and yet have felt at times that the soul within them seeks and should find some object exterior and superior to the things of earth—to consciences that sometimes sting with scorpion acuteness and make the spirit of a man tremble at the thought of an hereafter—to such minds popery comes with its high assumption of authority, its subtle pliability of adaptation, its specious parade of promised security, its professedly charitable and effectual application of a balm, and the ignorant, the indifferent, and yet the superstitious portion of our population may be expected to become its prey. Credulity and superstition are the close concomitants of ignorance. Thus tales of supernatural character pass current as confirmed verities amongst the illiterate throng, and fit them to receive and admit as divine truth all the monstrous absurdities, the grotesque deformities which this strange system has produced.

We all know the extent to which *quackery* is patronized by the vulgar, because of the very unscrupulous character of its bold assertions, while *true science* with its real but less palpable wonders is deserted and despised; and so the high claims, and bold averments, and dictatorial injunctions of the man of sin, are applauded and



admired by a deluded people. Another indication of the popular ignorance, or of the want of true spiritual discernment of large portions of our operatives may be observed in the spread of another error, that of Mormonism. How strange a blindness must have been upon the eyes of the multitudes who have been deluded by a falsehood so glaringly and disgustingly devoid even of those outer semblances of truth, with which error usually feels constrained to cover over her naked deformity. That thousands should still so madly applaud as a prophet, one whose villany and imposture were so palpably and incontestably demonstrated, that he at length seemed scarcely to claim the character of sincerity, but with a bold effrontery chuckled at the success of his imposition, spite of the arguments, the warnings, the earnest exertions of those who witnessed the delusion and subsequent ruin in which his misguided followers were involved—that men should still receive as a prophet such a man as Smith, the originator of this glaring fraud, is an exhibition of mental obliquity of vision, an illustration of the absence of rational discrimination, which must shock and startle and alarm all who view it as a symptom of the spiritual health of any class of his fellow-creatures, fellow-countrymen, fellow immortals. Surely there has been a grievous fault somewhere in which this ignorance originates—sad neglect of our teeming multitudes must have prepared the way for darkness so intense.

Hear what an earnest man says and thinks upon the subject. Dr. Burnet at the annual meeting of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, 1849, said:—"Look at the great masses of your population which are congregated in your manufacturing districts and towns; for it is in these towns and districts, and not in London, where the battle of the country, the battle of the Church, ay, the battle of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, must be fought. My Christian friends, it is awful to contemplate the condition of those masses of the population of enlightened Christian England. The ignorance of God, and of salvation through the ever-blessed

Redeemer, which prevails amongst us, is a disgrace to this Christian country. The wickedness, the sin which is rife amongst us, is so appalling, that it makes one to say, that it is only because God has found ten righteous men, that he withholds his hand. . . . Facts are stubborn things, but they are also useful things; and upon this question, with permission, I will lay a few before this meeting. In my parish of Bradford, we may take it that the population now amounts to upwards of 66,000 souls. I fully believe that I am quite correct in saying that no manufacturing town, and therefore no town in the kingdom, has so rapidly increased in population as the town of Bradford. Now, my lord, for the vast population we have only church accommodation for 6,654 persons. . . . The dissenters (leaving out 500 sittings provided by the Socinians, and 800 by the Roman Catholics)—the other dissenters—what I may call the evangelized body of dissenters, provide sittings for about 13,000 persons; so that in the parish of Bradford, with a population exceeding 66,000, we have sittings for a less number than 20,000—under one-third of the population. That, my lord, is a deplorable fact; but I am about to mention facts more deplorable still.

“The public-house accommodation, and the beer-shop accommodation, is ample enough—there is no stint of the temples of Satan. It is lamentable, my lord, that there is, in the town of Bradford, more accommodation for the ignorant people to consume the soul-destroying and health-destroying, and domestic-comfort-destroying productions of the fiery still, than there is in the house of God. I have taken considerable interest in this matter, and calculating that each public-house and each beer-shop will afford sitting-room at one time to twenty persons, I find that, while we have only church accommodation for 6,000 of our people, there is accommodation provided for 7,860 of the profligate. Again, my lord, it would astonish you to be amongst that population, and see the avidity with which the working man purchases the infidel publications which, unfortunately,

are placed within his reach. I have paid much attention to this most lamentable fact. I have myself watched the matter after it reached my knowledge, and I have myself seen many a poor working man, dressed in little better than a collection of rags, come from where he has been receiving his weekly wages, and go to those infidel shops and spend his tenpence or a shilling. What does this fact prove? Does it not prove to what education, without religion, tends? Does it not prove to what a secular education must inevitably lead the people? It proves, my lord, that it is not enough to cultivate the intellect—you must do more. While cultivating the intellect, you must teach the religion of Christ—while improving the understanding, you must place Jesus in the heart."

Who, indeed, need be surprised if religious ignorance and alienation abound, where agencies for good must be so few, and agencies for evil are so multiform and multiplied. Oh! what an earnest cry for Divine forgiveness towards their sinful indifference may the people of God in this our land put up—and how resolutely, how constantly, should the uplifted hand of devotion plead with a justly offended God, that he would yet spare a little longer these cumberers of the ground, that the hand of Christian diligence may dig about them and dung them. The voice of many a brother's blood that has been shed—the blood of many a lost soul must cry out to God against the heartless apathy, and the idle indifference with which the Christians of our country have allowed the mischief to be perpetuated and magnified. May His spirit rouse the sleeping energies of the nation, and excite one mighty prayerful effort to chase away the dark phantom of ignorance that shadows the thresholds and darkens the hearths of our cottage homes.

But passing from the class we have been describing, whose ignorance of the religion of Jesus is so deplorable, we reach another which is characterized by indifference. These men acknowledge and understand the great outlines of the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, but

they exhibit utter thoughtlessness as to everything of a practical character as respects religion. They are servants who know their master's will but do it not. There are peculiarities in this feature of the natural man, which, as applicable to the class we are considering, we would mention briefly. They indicate, in too many instances, the most reckless carelessness. When reprov- ed for any particular sin, such men do not, as you find in more educated and elevated classes, begin to argue with you as to the amount of guilt involved in the act for which you blame them—do not attempt to defend themselves on the ground that they meant no harm—but admitting the justness of your expostulations, avow- ing their breach of the divine law, they fall back on the deadness of their own hearts, and calculate on the continuance of their inward peace, not on their skill to blunt the arrows of conviction which you direct against them, but on the horny coat by which their cauterized consciences are protected.

Multitudes amongst us little consider how fearfully indicative this indifference is, of the sad demoralization of multitudes in the class whose condition we are endeavouring fully and faithfully to set before the public eye. The late awful visitation of the cholera, by which God was dealing with us in judgment, has tended to develop this grievously painful state of mind. The following extracts are from the reports of the Mission- aries employed by the Manchester City Mission, and printed in the Mission Magazine for November, 1849. The Missionary says, p. 69 :—"A woman whom I visited on Thursday, in perfect health, was drinking with another woman; I read to them part of the 50th Psalm, and faithfully warned them; and they said that I had cleared my conscience of their blood. Soon after I left, the husband of one of them came in, and she said, ' We have been having a good spree, but the missionary came and said if we did not repent we should be damned; but *at all events we will have another glass.*' That night the cholera seized her, and in her agony consequent upon it, she cried out, ' the missionary said, if I did not

repent I should be damned, and *I believe I shall!* I was sent for, and read and prayed with her; but she was very indifferent, and died the same day at three o'clock. Her companion continued to drink till Sunday, when she was seized, and I was sent for; but she *showed great indifference*, and said 'If I would call after tea, she would speak to me; but when I called, she said it was not convenient; and in *this state of mind* was taken to the hospital, *where she died.*'

There is the most fearful deadness and apathy to the highest interests exhibited in scenes like these, and yet are they lamentably frequent amongst the operative poor. The provision for merely animal wants, the securing their bodily enjoyment, seem almost to shut out of view the consideration that they are immortal beings. There are hundreds of cottages to be found in which there is not a single copy of the word of God, though the inhabitants have the means of purchasing and capacity for reading the sacred Scriptures. A Colporteur, employed under the British and Foreign Bible Society, found in the neighbourhood of Manchester, in a short visitation in the year 1849, no less than 900 families, in which *no portion of the Holy Bible* was to be found.

This speaks strongly as to the indifference of a class of our operative fellow-men. Again, the observation of their habits at the close of the week would lead to the same conclusion. Who, that has been familiar with our manufacturing operatives, has not observed the peculiarity of their position on a Saturday evening! The holiday suit is then put on, the accumulating dirt of the week washed off, and the workman assumes his most respectable appearance. Marketing might be assigned as the ostensible cause of the change; but we need only follow to their haunts the great majority of the workmen, to find that *it is not the real one*. The indulgence of the bodily appetite, the making an appearance in the presence of their fellows, these are the true objects in view. How different is their appearance on the following morning. The slovenly appearance till mid-afternoon

of Sunday shews how little the great God is thought of, His houses open in vain—His servants visit in vain—His ministers invite in vain—the thoughtless earthling is recruiting his energies prostrated by last night's revel, and preparing for a still deeper draught of the cup of sin. This spiritual indifference is a fearful evil in our land—it is stealing with its freezing influence still further and further on every hand, and its death-like chillness runs on from the cold extremities of the body social, and threatens to affect the greater organs by which the warm life-blood ought to be propelled into every the minutest member.

Here, then, is the work for Christian charity. It is, perhaps, a painful, but it is a blessed work, for he that shall attempt, by *the continued friction* of his warnings, his exhortations, his constant irritation of the slumber-seeking conscience, to induce again the circulation of healthy feeling in the well-nigh spiritual torpidity of his indifferent fellow-creature, will soon discover that the very exercise of his kind offices has returned with blessing on himself, for *his own languid circulation* will be accelerated—his own cold selfishness pass into the pleasurable glow of a warm philanthropy—and while the heaving chest and quivering nostril, and re-opening eye of his once fallen neighbour intimate that consciousness and life and health are returning, the delightful rush of happy thought on his own soul will tell him, that while he was using his every effort to ameliorate the spiritual condition of a fellow-man, the “Giver of every good and every perfect gift” has been pouring out the richness of his blessings on his own happier soul.

But, advancing in the order of education of our operatives, and *descending still lower* in our search after the pernicious influences which affect them, we come now to consider their position as *respects infidelity*. The class to be reviewed in connection with this subject, is by no means *so large* as those treated of under the head of ignorance and indifference; but it comprises those who, as being *more active*, are *more dangerous*—and as being *more self-conceited*, are *more impracticable*. This class

comprehends those who meet your exhortations to greater devotion to the service of Christ, by doubts or denial of his right to demand or receive such service ; by sceptic inquiries as to the character of the Deity ; by strongly-expressed opinions as to the inspiration, etc., of the Scriptures ; by loud eulogiums of the religion of reason ; and by strong and sarcastic invectives against priestcraft, puritanism, or what they deem bugbears by which to alarm and cheat the ignorant vulgar.

The existence of such a spirit, is deeply to be deplored ; and its peculiar character deserves the serious investigation of us all. To this end, we may enquire *under what forms, by what means, and to what extent* this baneful leaven is at work. Its usual manner of presentation to the working-man is, on the ground of modern enlightenment. He is reminded of the progress which science and art have made within the memory of the present generation ; he is taught that it is time that reason be emancipated—that thought should be allowed to take its place in the onward movement that is made in everything beside. The time-honoured opinions of former religionists, he is told, have proved only so many shackles to the spirit, and that the free-thinkers of the day are the real benefactors of their race, in opening out before the daring intellect higher flights than the tongue-tied, thought-crippled adherents of the received faith ever would have dared to suggest. Existing notions of necessary sanctity are to be put to the test, as to their truth, by the instinctive impulses which, it is said, God has given us as indications of His designs respecting us ; and the strong, uniform, and innate evidence of the passions teaches, and was intended to teach, that the Creator meant not to be served by what is called the starched precision, and sour phariseeism of modern Evangelicism—but in the full, free, and rational gratification of the appetites that he has given. We are taught that the doctrine of an atonement, the necessity of a sacrificial offering for sin, by the great Emanuel is, and has been, the great blinding principle by which a tyrannical and grasping priesthood have rivetted the

spiritual manacles on their miserable slaves and tools ; that we may safely trust to the natural elasticity of the mind of man to bring him up to the proper level of his intended elevation, when the dead-weights of prejudice, passion, etc., have been got rid of under the judicious application of intellectual and moral training ; and that the religion of nature disdains the offered assistance of revelation, as it reprobates its insinuation of man's weakness and protests loudly against its attempt to supplementalise man's knowledge. Modern illumination tells us of the so-called *religious element* which pervades all creeds, and finds a place in all hearts—and it teaches that the noble and dignified effort of modern enlightenment is to turn attention from the different modifications in which this element is clothed, to the primitive atom, so to speak, to which those modifications cohere—and so tend to unite together in one homogeneous and accordant body the now scattered sections of the family of man. The natural depravity of the human heart is denied, and high-sounding statements as to the dignity of man are put forth at once to minister to the pride and to pervert the judgments of those whose spiritual ruin is to be wrought. In order to this the Sacred Scriptures are the object of constant and virulent abuse. It is pretended that they are not the productions of the persons and the times to which Christians assign them—that their facts are the fictions of Eastern speculatists or priestly imposture—that their miraculous revelations are palpable cheats—their doctrines derogatory to God, and confused and contradictory in themselves—opposed to the dictates of sound reason, and hostile to the pleasure, the liberty, -and the common sense of mankind. That what we now receive as the word of God has been modified in its transmission from primitive times—and has been adulterated by the admixture of human error through interpolations and abbreviations of the text, and by the ignorance and wilful misrepresentations of partial translators. The verbal inspiration is regarded as a foolish invention of weak bigots, and the contemptuous term of Bibliolatry



is applied to those who would retain what is called so monstrous an opinion.

The genius of Milton is placed on the same level with the inspiration of Isaiah; and the productions of Byron are attributed to the same mental elevation as the Divine songs of the sweet psalmist of Israel. The dissecting knife of modern criticism professes and presumes to have cut down to the unsoundness of the argumentation of the Apostle Paul; while the microscopic glass of modern investigation has discovered to neologian experimentalists the long neglected cracks that weaken and disfigure the fancied firm fundamentals of St. John. Thus doubt and uncertainty are insinuated amongst minds only too ready to be furnished with some specious reason for neglecting that which so loudly and unsparingly cries out against their crimes, and whose solemn warnings and explicit doctrines have often so annoyingly interfered when they would say to their souls, "Peace, peace, when there was no peace."

Satan knows full well that Dagon must fall flat upon his face, before the ark of God, and that the mutilated stump of error will ever bring glory to the sacred mysteries of the truth, which is the power of God. The light of God's word illumines darkened minds, and exhibits too glaringly the deformities of infidelity to be willingly allowed to shine, and hence the anxiety that it should be hidden or withdrawn. While error with syren voice and smile goes abroad to tempt and bewitch mankind, the Gospel turns its penetrating lamp upon her filthy home, and exhibits to the startled eye of those she would delude, how abject is the slavery and how debased the misery of the swinish herd that wallow in the filth, and pine on the husks which her wretched sties afford.

The heart sickens as it contemplates the unrelieved wretchedness, the rayless darkness into which infidelity would introduce the already sufficiently oppressed working man; and in tones loud and deep, in accents faltering from very excess of feeling, we would say to every impugner of the truth of the Word of God—you are

imbruings your hands in the blood of the souls of your fellow-immortals—for your own sakes and for theirs, O cease your hellish arts—take off the fascination of your eye from your spell-bound victim, and pause ere you destroy both body and soul in hell. Let our operatives be ever on their guard against these fiendish devices, and count him to be the deadliest enemy they have, who would unsettle their faith in the great and important verities of the Word of God. Their statements about natural religion have been a thousand times refuted by the actual and uniform testimony of experience. The law is to man, in his fallen capacity, what our atmosphere is to a bird with a broken wing. That which was designed and fitted, in its uncrippled soundness, to be the medium by which, on the wings of faith and love, it might pass upwards and onwards through ever-increasing light and joy, and ever approximating nearness to the great source of all light and of all joy—that is now a deceptive element which yields to its now earthward tendencies, and gives away only to precipitate its ruin, and to aggravate its misery. He who would cast up a poor crippled bird to the tender mercies of an atmosphere where it can now no longer find support, would be branded for his cruelty, notwithstanding his profession of kindness; but how doubly deep and loud should be the cry of execration which should greet the ear of him who would cast men upon the deceptive strength of their own ability to rise to heaven by works of righteousness which they themselves can do. Let our workmen look well to this, and let them weigh well this one consideration.

Christianity allowedly can do all that infidelity professes to do. The Christian *may be* as happy, as holy, as honoured of God and man, as the Infidel *can be*. If then the Infidel even be right, the believer is in as good a position as he. But if the Infidel be wrong, and the believer right, O how fearful is the contrast in their respective condition! Let this thought be burnt in upon the memory of our operative fellow-men; and it will point out how that policy, prudence, if there were

no higher, stronger, or holier consideration, should cause a man to put away for ever an evil heart of unbelief. But it will be well to enquire by what means these pernicious doctrines and principles are sought to be insinuated. These, we believe, will be found to be many and various ; but a considerable experience with working-men, induces us to particularize two—the *press*, and *private conversation or discussion*. The extent to which the propagation of infidel, immoral, and antisocial opinions has been carried amongst the working-classes, by means of cheap periodicals, has become really alarming. Our back streets in every manufacturing town, send forth from little petty shops familiar to the working-man, the weekly mass of polluting matter by which our poor men's minds are poisoned ; and even our country villages are inundated by a literature which firsts attracts by its cheapness, and then demoralizes by its impurities.

The writer purchased, in one of our large manufacturing towns, for seventeen-pence, a large number of these publications, as he found them issued on a given week ; and the perusal of these tracts has left upon his mind the painful conviction, that a people that shall find pleasure in reading productions so immoral, cannot but be deteriorating, unless some powerful antidote be largely and cheaply provided. The vile prostitution of evident talent, by which many of them are characterised, would intimate that the enemy is making a mighty effort—while the doctrines and principles put forth—the characters held up for admiration and imitation—must give to the minds of their readers a tone and temper which will make them unhappy in themselves, dangerous to society, and awfully disobedient to their God. At the last annual meeting of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, the subject of these publications was thus alluded to by one of the speakers :—“ It was only yesterday that a friend of mine sent me the publication which I hold in my hand, and which is only a specimen, he tells me, of one out of about 300 penny publications, which issue every week in this metropolis. I am not certain of the number,

but it is very large. But this I do remember, that they circulate about 300,000 sheets every week, which are distributed partly in the metropolis, and partly in the great manufacturing districts. And to these you must add, as of like character in a great degree, the publications which flow from the Sunday press—from the “*Dispatch*” downwards. These amount to somewhere about 200,000; so that every week, 500,000 publications of such tone and temper as this issue forth, conducted by men of great ability, of very considerable political knowledge, who have a perfect understanding of the feeling of the masses, for with them they are connected, on them they live, from them they have sprung.

“These publications circulate weekly into all the parts of the empire; and, my lord, what is the tone and temper of these publications? I am not going to intrude upon the time and feelings of this meeting by any quotations from them; but this I may say generally, that to all the great institutions of our country, from the throne downwards—the throne, the church, the pastor, and the higher classes—to every class in society, in fact, except the masses, they are violently opposed. Their very names indicate the feelings with which they are written. It is very true that they have displaced from the lanes and alleys of our great cities a great number of those stories and ballads which used to prevail there; but then, they have filled them with the most venomous incentives to violence, pointing to the rich as robbers—pointing to the constitution as one great usurpation—pointing to the church as one scene of personal interest and impious hypocrisy. This is the venom which is poured out weekly into the hearts and minds of at least a reading and inquiring, and a most toiling and suffering people. I ask anybody to reflect for a moment upon this, and to consider what must be the effect upon minds goaded and harassed by such publications, and upon bodies worn and suffering under such toil. Why, it is perfectly evident that the effect must be, as it is in so many cases, to excite them against society—to poison

them, first with misery and discontent at home, and then to prepare them for any manner of criminal outrage and disorder." The speaker might have added, that their effect must be to darken their understanding of God and of Christ, to deceive them as to their true situation in the sight of an all-searching Judge, to debase and dwarf the entire soul, and to deprive it as well of a title as of a "meetness for an inheritance with the saints in light."

But what is the character of the literature in question. In matters of faith we find it stuffed at times with *finely drawn distinctions*, that pass for *the accuracy of philosophy*, and *cunning definitions* that appear to promise a *close attention to the precision of logic*. These give an air of *learning*, and impart an *idea of honesty*, while the *real point* of the production is to be found in plainly enunciated contempt and disregard of the truth of our holy religion. Thus one writer, whose tracts circulate amongst our operatives (Theodore Parker) at one time mounts the stilts, and stalks in mock loftiness in a strain like this<sup>a</sup>:—"Of course, then, there is no difference but of words between *revealed* religion and *natural* religion; for all actual religion is revealed in us, or it could not be felt; and all revealed religion is natural, or it would be of no use. What is of use to man lies in the plane of his consciousness, neither above it nor below it. He may regard this one religion from different points of view, and give corresponding names to our partial conceptions which have been purposely limited, and so speak of natural and revealed religion—Monotheistic, Polytheistic or Pantheistic, Pagan, Jewish, Christian, Mahometan religion." Now this has a *learned look*, an *epigrammatic smartness*, a *philosophic air*, which was intended to strike the attention of most young readers—teachers in Sunday-schools—members of Mechanic Institutions, and the like, whose ear must first have been tickled, and plain common sense obscured, before they could be expected to be prepared for the grosser and less disguised scepticism which couples<sup>b</sup> the Palladium, the Ancilia, and

<sup>a</sup> p. 27.      <sup>b</sup> p. 36.

the Ark of the Covenant together, or that tells us that<sup>a</sup> “Jacob drives a trade with Elohim; the God receives a *human* service as adequate return for his own *divine* service. The promise of each is only ‘for value received,’” Gen. xxviii. 10—12.

The spirit and tendency of such a production, one need not be at a loss to discover; and the mind is sensible of difference only, in the grossness and vulgarity in manner in which the same things are sought to be accomplished, in the following extract, commenting on the prayer put forth by the Archbishop of Canterbury, on occasion of the recent severe visitation of the Cholera;—“The blasphemous ‘ape,’ who, clothed in purple and fine linen, liveth on the fat of the land at Lambeth Palace, tells us we have not deserved to be free from that ‘visitation of God’s wrath which has afflicted other nations of the earth.’ Impudent idolater! How dare he prate to God Almighty about the deserts of his creatures. The wretched tinkerer of souls shows, by daring so idiotic, his ignorance of everything truly divine. Admitting a Giver of all good, we say with Shakspeare, ‘the less we deserve, the more we merit in his bounty.’ Deserts forsooth! Why if men are to be punished in some other world according to their deserts in this, what shall hinder our ‘apes of Deity’ from being tumbled into hell? And if Cholera, or other destroying pestilences, are sent by a merciful God as a sort of Irish corrective for sinfulness, how happens it that his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, and so many other soul-tinkerers, have escaped their deadly influence.” In such strain does this wretched writer go on, and then concludes with the announcement, that a particular room “will be opened at eight o’clock, for a quadrille party as usual, when all who dread the cholera may ‘drive dull fear away’ by joining in the dance.”

Such are some of the apostles of infidelity, whose doctrines the working-classes are liable to imbibe, while “The Town,” “The Terrific Register,” “The London Journal,” “The Weekly Magazine of Fiction,” are the

<sup>a</sup> p. 43.

<sup>b</sup> The Lancashire Beacon, No. 12, p. 93.

sources whence the morality of the people is expected to be drawn, and the patterns which they are expected to imitate. But there is yet another agency by which the same unholy ends are sought to be accomplished, and that is private conversation or discussion. Every one acquainted with the habits of our working-classes, must have observed how commonly their little necessities and conveniences of life are supplied by a peculiar sort of travelling tradesmen. These, from the travelling tea-merchant down to the peripatetic mender of bellows, have their accustomed hours of call at the cottages of our working-men. Many of them are respectable men, earning an honest livelihood by a creditable diligence, but not a few are steeped in infidelity and sin to the very lips. The little store of books on the shelf of the industrious mechanic, furnishes, perhaps, an introduction to the topic to which it was intended that the conversation should turn. The visitor expresses his pleasure that the workman is an admirer of books, which furnish, he says, so much pleasure to himself. The simple-minded master of the household is amazed at the information of the man, while he is fairly carried away by his fluency. He wonders at the knowledge displayed on questions of science, history, politics, etc. ; and when the subject of religion is broached, he is already disposed to be ashamed of his old-fashioned opinions, which he is glad to withdraw from the withering sarcasm of his scornful man of science.

Books are spoken of by the visitor, that he says breathe the true spirit of philosophy, and have kept up with the advancing progress of the age. A contemptuous allusion to old familiar doctrines, a well-timed sneer at selfish sanctimoniousness, a well-feigned expression of compassion towards those who can still be deluded by the extravagancies of the Bible—these are all put forth as the peculiarities of the case may require ; and the cockatrice egg of scepticism is left to be hatched in due time. Such are some of the men at work. Others occupy a well-known seat, night after night, at the snug corner of the fireside of the well-customed public-house.

They are the oracles of the gradually sinking wretches, who are but too glad to attribute to fancied wrongs and social grievances the misery which is really traceable to their own disorderly habits, or to turn their eyes from the conscious corruption of their own hearts, to the pretended blemishes in the characters, and rottenness in the religious faith, of their happier, because more orderly neighbours. By such men all the exploded objections against Christianity and the Bible are raked up again from the oblivion into which repeated refutation had cast them; and they subserve again the hellish purpose of first startling the ignorant, and then embittering them against that book and those teachers by which their shallow sophistries would be detected. Agencies like these are employed amongst the poor to an extent, and with a system, that betoken design, indicate unity, and skill of purpose, and seem to point out the necessity of close application to the entire features of a question on which the great enemy seems to act so determinately, perseveringly, and in a manner so well calculated to ensure success in his evil efforts. We believe that thousands of minds have been poisoned by such means. It gives a man an appearance of wisdom in the eyes of the ignorant, when he has so far emancipated himself from what are called old prejudices, as to dare to doubt—and he is hailed as a new-comer in the school of sceptics, who had been gratified by no notoriety in the school of Bible faith.

Now, while such influences act in the midst of so much ignorance and indifference, need we be surprised if we are told that great immorality abounds. Their evil advisers, and their great spiritual enemy unite in leading them to undervalue and neglect the Bible; they stumble, in consequence, in spiritual darkness; the attractive influence by which the servants of God are drawn towards Him as the great centre of the spiritual system is unfelt by them; and instead of finding their happy round of duties in an orbit which His wisdom has marked out, they are hurried by the strong impulse of their own bad passions, and pressed on by the unquiet



stingings of their own consciences, into alienation, distance, and disobedience. It is a painful thought that, in multitudes of the poorer ranks of life so little regard for the laws of God exists. He himself is seldom in their thoughts; His name is ever in profanation on their lips; His day is desecrated to worldly, and in too many instances, to profane purposes; His Word, though offered largely, is despised or neglected; His Son is crucified afresh, and put to an open shame; His people are ridiculed and opposed; His ministers misunderstood and misrepresented; His promises contemptuously refused; His warnings and invitations unlistened to; His threatenings unheeded; His doctrines unstudied; His precepts disobeyed. Look into the habits of multitudes of our working-men. How little regard is often shown for the old and dependent parents, whom the laws of God have committed to the care of their stronger and younger offspring; though every feeling of duty, gratitude and affection must cry out against the hard heart that could give them pain.

How many outbursts of unbridled passion tell that the sixth commandment is broken in spirit; and how many sad instances of impurity discover that the seventh presents no obstacle against the indulgence of an unholy lust. How frequent, too, are the instances in which the honesty inculcated in the eighth is forgotten. Debts, it may be, are contracted with scarcely a wish or hope that they should be discharged; and the foolish shopkeeper that is persuaded to commence his business on *the system of credit*, soon finds, to his sorrow, that his little stock has been exhausted by a crowd of fair-spoken but unprincipled customers. Then, how much of evil-speaking and slander appears amongst neighbours; how much of envious dissatisfaction with his own condition, how sad a spirit of readiness to hear evil of those above him, characterizes many a working-man. These all are evidences of immorality, indicate that the will of the creature lies not in a line which is parallel to the will of the Creator, and tells us of the secret of that restlessness, unhappiness, and degradation in which many of our operatives lie.

The sins of the people rise up as a thick cloud, and obscure the face of the Sun of Righteousness, and the gloom which hangs murkily over the miserable masses is but as the shadow of the coming death—the penumbra of the blackness of darkness for ever. The thunder-cloud of Divine vengeance is thickening over such scenes of iniquity, charged with the electric arrows of his sore judgments; oh that there might be put into the startled souls of the conscience-stricken sinners of the land, the salutary knowledge that the cross of Christ, clung to by faith, and presented to the threatening cloud, is the only conductor that can avert the bolt. Then would the noxious element be drawn out, and the big drops of descending blessings would tell that the outpoured Spirit can make the dry soul soft, and the barren spirit bloom and bear. That the ignorance and indifference of many poor people is an evil, morally, socially, politically, no thinking man can deny;—that it is a growing evil in many parts of our country, the peculiarities of society in crowding multitudes of the careless together, without a correspondent concentration of disinfecting influences, constrain us to allow;—that it is an unmanageable and irremediable evil, the power and promise of God, the observation of the event from the application of self-denying exertion, equally constrain us to deny.

The practical part of our subject, therefore, yet remains to be discussed, and if, under God, we can throw out any suggestion which may tend to elevate and cheer our degraded and suffering fellow-creatures, while it tends to promote the glory of His great name—to Him be all the praise, as from Him assuredly comes all the power. And truly as the soul that has experienced His grace and power, looks upwards at the glory that awaits the redeemed spirit—inwardly at the joy and peace in believing which illumine and bless itself—and then outwardly at the sin and sorrow and sad anticipation of evil which glare out of the brutalized faces of our wretched fellow-creatures, a heavenly ardour fills the heart—a holy resolution nerves the arm—and a sense of ministerial grace, and eventual triumph sustains

the courage with which the champion of truth goes forth to battle against the enemies of Israel, and to rescue the wretched prisoners of Satan from the spiritual bondage in which they pine. May the Author of all good guide us in our inquiries, and press home on many, many hearts, the considerations of duty which He may enable us to put before them !

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## CHAPTER VI.

### ON THE BEST MEANS OF PROMOTING THE TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF THE CLASSES WE HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING.

It is a pleasing task to turn the mind towards devising plans for the amelioration of one's species ; it extends the contracted horizon of selfishness, drives away the thick dull cloud of melancholy which apathy and inactivity generate, and makes a man happy in the exercise of his benevolent feelings with so high and promising an end in view. "In the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom," and it becomes all who have the opportunity, to cast into the common stock of enlightened philanthropy, whatever suggestions may seem calculated to promote the general good. This, however, should be done wisely and coolly.

Few things have tended so much to impede the progress of improvement as the too common weakness which makes good men the partisans of a particular system, the warm advocates of their own schemes, and opponents of those of others. The stubbornness with which *crotchets* are clung to, *disgusts the lukewarm*, and *harasses, cripples, and chafes the really anxious to do good*. Moderation in the enforcement of our own private views, and a willingness to merge our individual speculations in our earnest desire to secure unity and concentration of action on the evils which manifestly exist,

ought to be constantly kept in view. In looking at the condition of our manufacturing population we have observed the imperfection of their education. What means, then, can be devised by way of improving this, as to its amount and quality? Two evils have risen as the consequence of past neglect, which tell prejudicially against efforts after improvement in these our times—viz., a *want of teachers sufficiently skilled* to make education attractive and beneficial, and a *want of taste and interest* on the part of the classes to which it should be applied, sufficient to induce them to make sacrifices on its account. The former of these evils is in the course of rapid removal from the establishment of our training institutions where men are instructed not only what to teach, but how to teach, and whence from time to time are going forth so many intelligent instructors to raise the character of their profession in the estimation of society, and so pave the way for the introduction of a higher class still to this honourable and useful calling. The judicious system of pupil-teachers put forth and worked by the help of the Committee of Council on Education looks in the same direction, and fills us with something approaching confident expectation that, in the hands of agents so superior as our rising teachers may be expected to be, the work of education will soon be much more efficiently done. But the other evil still exists to a great extent. Parents that have never known the value and the satisfaction of intellectual and moral culture cannot be brought thoroughly to appreciate its importance to their children, and, as a consequence, education will in general be found to be most deficient and unsatisfactory, where the abounding ignorance makes it most essential. How, then, may this evil be met?

We do not here profess to enter upon the question as to the duty, policy, or propriety of *state interference* in this question—but would confine our observations to the opportunities which individual members of the body social may seize to forward so desirable an object. The establishment of ragged schools may be regarded as a

plan by which the evil, in its most malignant form, may be counteracted by an agency the most simple and elementary, as applicable to the young. Their very existence is an index of the grievous amount of the educational deficiency; and their most complete organization is only the preparation of means by which some of the rougher angularities are rudely hammered off from those whom we wish to transfer to other scenes for the full polish and graceful proportions of the rightly informed mind and heart. The promotion of the establishment of such institutions is, therefore, a good and wise measure; and in every neighbourhood where the masses of our working-classes congregate and corrupt one another, the friends of order should not consider their educational apparatus complete until they have put into operation an agency similar to that of ragged schools; by which the neglected refuse of the lowest of the people may be acted on for good. But, ascending in the social scale, we find much indifference to the instruction of their children amongst men who cannot be identified with the abject class for which ragged-schools were devised. Upon these, other influences should be brought to bear. Employers can do much, and should do much, in this particular. Let it but be known amongst the operative classes, that education will form one, and a prominent circumstance which masters consider in the selection of their servants, and *interest* will soon influence those, whose well-being depends upon their production of the *most taking commodity in the market of labour*. Parents would soon discover the propriety, and as soon, in many instances, find the means of sending the little ones to school—when it was known that the employers of the neighbourhood regarded the schoolmaster's certificate of creditable proficiency and good conduct, to be as necessary as the register of baptism to attest the age; and that the intelligent master to whom they looked for the means of their family's support was wont himself to visit the establishments where their children were taught, for the purpose of selecting for services of confidence and trust those whose intelligence and respectability of deportment had already gained for them estimation in the school.

The feeling of emulation would *stimulate the pupils*, the evidence of improvement would *cheer and encourage the teacher*, the employer would see, springing up round about him, those to whose more matured and disciplined minds, and more healthily beating hearts, the interests of his business might be more safely committed; and a class of men having sources of pleasure within themselves and their own homes, would rise up, as the happy promoters of the nation's greatness, and the prudent protectors of the nation's peace. The more direct patronage of education would tend still more to secure the same happy results. Thus, employers, and what *are* the richer, and are *called* the higher ranks of society, might give sanction and support by securing to themselves the right of nomination of pupils to be instructed gratis, and to be regarded as exhibitioners, *honoured* by the selection made; or by undertaking to assist the poorer families in the effort to provide for the due instruction of their little ones. Experience, we think, will justify the statement, that gratuitous instruction, in general, *is not desirable*. The poor man is tempted to count that valueless which costs him nothing; and the attention of the whole family is likely to be directed to the character of that for which each feels he is called upon to pay. But education, worthy of the name, be it remembered, is not what is known as *merely secular* education. To pretend to make a separation between the intellectual and the religious, we believe, is practically impossible—and even in the very attempt full of danger and deception. It is the *essence of formality* to conceive religion to be confined to particular times, places, or persons.

There is a natural tendency in man to make a kind of compromise between Mammon and God—and to make up for conscious undue devotion to the things of this world, by giving a *certain stated*, oft constrained attention to the things of a world to come. It is most pernicious to encourage such notions; and such would, we conceive, be the sad effect of attempting to discriminate between what was secular, and what religious in education. The truth is, that religion must apply in every,

the most minute modification of thought and feeling—its presence hallowing, or its absence lowering all. It is this which gives the motives, by which the true character of actions is discovered; and to instruct a responsible immortal without constant reference to the great Being whose servant he is, and at whose tribunal he will be required to appear, is to instruct *him imperfectly*—to leave out the primary element—the principal ingredient in that food which, as a spiritual existence, he requires. But the very attempt is impracticable. He that would attempt to conduct the education of his pupils on such a principle as this, would but exhibit his own want of due regard for the high claims which his God has on his best time, talents and influence; while he illustrated his want of knowledge of the very secret of his supposed success. *Order* supposes *religion*, and the very *authority of the master*, when traced to its elementary principle, will be found to rest on the authority and law of God, if it have any salutary influence on him that is to render obedience. The *lack* of the religious element, and not its *excess* has formed the weakness in our systems for the education of the masses. The shell of mere religious forms committed to the memory was mistaken for the true kernel of the incorruptible seed sought to be deposited in the heart. Bare facts, and ill-understood doctrinal disquisitions were heaped up in confusion, instead of “the line upon line, precept upon precept,” which supplied the convenient amount of food to the observed hunger and appetite. Hence the failure in so many instances—if *failure it may be called*—when the bread of life is cast upon the waters, which we may find after many days. But while Christian benevolence will feel happy in providing, under God, for the better education of the future workmen of our land, by inculcating salutary truths on their infant’s minds now, yet cannot its holy efforts cease till some educational agency can be made to tell on the present adult population. Attempts have already been made in many places, and the effect has been generally *such as to give great encouragement to expect that greater things might still be done by a more enlarged and combined effort.*

It would be well were each individual Christian to look round on his own immediate neighbourhood and consider whether he could not find occasion to undertake the intellectual and moral improvement even of one of the uninstructed poor. We believe that the daily visit by a Christian lady would be welcomed in many a poor man's household, and the daily little lesson by which the poor man's wife was taught, would touch the heart while it enlightened the mind, and would prove one of the many mystic ties by which society is bound together. Evening classes would form an agency of a more systematic and extended character, and when judiciously arranged to give instruction on subjects of sound and useful knowledge, would prove productive of still greater good. But there is one contrivance specially suited, we conceive, to the peculiarities of our present population, and to which we would confidently look, by God's blessing, to a large amount of good. It is the establishment of *adult Sunday Schools*. If, in every neighbourhood, the Christians to whom God has given a ripper experience in the things of religion, and a larger acquaintance with its truths, would but turn their attention to the instruction, on the Sunday afternoon or evening, as circumstances might dictate, of a certain number of the mothers, fathers, and elder brothers of our neglected operatives, their beautiful influence would be telling upon a portion of our population too often overlooked, but possessed of large powers of influencing multitudes either for good or for evil.

The writer recently witnessed, with a feeling of thankfulness to God, and a sweetly soothing whisper of hope for the amelioration of the classes that he loves, the actual operation of a large establishment such as he has described. In the midst of a large manufacturing town he found one hundred and fifty adults, chiefly fathers and mothers of families ranged round their respective teachers, and learning the glad tidings of salvation. Difficulties might attend the establishment of such an agency in many neighbourhoods—but what can not Christian diligence accomplish—what would not



Christian love attempt, if its end be to bring glory to God, and knowledge, peace, salvation to fallen fellow-creatures. If such instrumentality were employed, we should soon discover, that it was a sieve by which even the most refuse part of the population might be proved to contain much that is truly valuable. Many a specimen of pure virgin ore might then come to light, which, refined and wrought under the influence of the Spirit of God, would prove fitting to ornament the temple of heaven itself, and many a jewel long lost in the superincumbent rubbish would then catch the eye of the skilful lapidary, and being polished in time would shine throughout eternity in the great Redeemer's crown. Oh! that Christian enterprise would search the more than Californian richness of our own neglected and too often despised poor. There is a deep and rich mine of high thought and fine feeling and noble character hidden from the observation of the world at large amongst the disgusting looking materials in which it is to be sought, but amply would he feel himself to be repaid, not only in the luxury of doing good, in the exercise of a holy ingenuity, but in the practical, palpable, return found in the elevation, emancipation, and happiness of his own defiled and wretched fellows.

But, besides efforts of the character mentioned, others should be put forth to promote their comfort and content. The latter would follow to a great extent, if the former were secured. The working classes have had but too much reason to complain of neglect on the part of those above them. They have had but too good ground for concluding that their employers are indifferent to their happiness and regard them only as part of the machinery by which their wealth is to be created. They feel that they are regarded almost as an inferior order of sentient beings, and as they witness filth and penury and despair gradually drawing nearer and nearer in a constantly lessening and thickening circle of ills which eventually will crush them, they become mad-dened by the very hopelessness of their condition, and *become dangerous from their very despair.* How, then,

must this sad state of things be remedied? Let us point to a few matters on which, for their own and their dependents' sake, those would do well to ponder who have a stake in the country's well-being. The first thing we would observe is, that a faithful diligent servant who expends his energies for another's good, has a right to expect a fair remuneration adequate to the comfortable support of himself and family. Exceptions will and must be found, but *this is the rule*, and consequently we say, that in economizing expenditure in any productive process, the last part of the cost to be touched is *this fair remuneration of the working man*. Extravagances done away in expenses on the manufacturing operations—reduction, *even to its entire abandonment for the time*, of profit—retrenchment in the luxuries, etc., of home—all these *should precede reduction of wages*.

Before we withhold from our dependents the means of a bare existence, surely it is but fair, charitable, and Christian, that we should ask ourselves if curtailment cannot first be made in our own *superfluities and indulgences*. There is a Divine fitness in such conduct. We must not think that all is saved that is not given. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty; but the blessing of the Lord maketh rich and He addeth no sorrow therewith." Parsimony is often short-sighted, "but the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand." Were the master's eye, which now so closely watches the amount of industry rendered by his workman, to turn now and then to the amount of domestic comfort enjoyed by him, it would soon see, we believe, that the attention given to the latter head of duty (for duty we feel it to be), would be no less effective and productive of good than that given to the former. No compulsion can extort from the oppressed that amount of diligence, which gratitude will prompt the benefited to put forth spontaneously. To cultivate, therefore, the good feeling of his workmen, and to win their affections by consideration of their comfort, is only another but a surer, holier, happier

way in which an employer secures *his own interests*. Let, then, every head of an establishment frequently inquire what is the condition of his operatives as respects comfort. Let him make a rule of entering kindly and cordially into a consideration of the home condition of every one that he employs. In this he should be joined and assisted by those in his neighbourhood whom God has placed in the position of opulence and its correspondent responsibility.

The frequent visitation of the cottages of the poor would be received as a kindness and an honour—would gradually be followed by a little preparation for the expected visit, and thus would lead to the perception of the beauty, comfort, and respectability of order and cleanliness—while it would impart to the visitant that practical knowledge which tells us what should be done, and would excite that charity, interest, and zeal, which would cause us to feel a pleasure in doing it. The varied circumstances of particular localities will suggest the precise method of action, if but charity furnish the proper motive and impulse. The establishment of model lodging-houses in some instances would be found a highly beneficial and remunerative undertaking—the strict attention to the sewerage and proper ventilation, etc., of old, or the erection of convenient new houses, at reasonable rents, would confer a large benefit, and be felt as a great boon by multitudes of our fellow-countrymen.

The more constant and kind intercourse amongst the different ranks of life is an agency that must again be called into active operation. The rich man when he retires from the habitations of his poorer brethren virtually leaves them to the tender mercies of the designing and the bad. How much more rational is his conduct who exhibits, by frequent intercourse with them, that he feels a sympathy for them. A thousand ways may be found out by which such a man may do good. He may propose some trifling prize to the wife whose cottage is kept in the most creditable cleanliness—organize combinations even amongst the workmen themselves for the purpose of

remunerating, by some reward or distinction, those who have educated the most respectably the largest family, and whose characters have been most distinguished by sobriety and general respectability. He may offer himself to be sought by the anxious father as one whose ear is known to be open to the tale of distress, and whose more matured judgment has been often found to be valuable in seasons of perplexity and difficulty. His influence may be lent to uphold parental authority, when the poor man's children give evidence of insubordination—his advice given, and his help afforded when the day of adversity draws on. He should be known and loved as a friend, while as a master he is honoured and obeyed.

Happy and blessed indeed is he of whom it may be said, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. . . . I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and *the cause which I knew not I searched out.*"—Job xxix, v. 11. But there are, doubtless, great obstacles in the way of philanthropic attempts to elevate the masses. Some of these can only give way before long, and continued, and prayerful efforts. They will call into requisition an untiring patience, and will prove the criterion by which *true* is discovered from *specious* charity. But there are others which may be, and ought to be, removed by legislative authority. For instance, the kind promoter of his fellow's good will deplore the strange infatuation which rules the habitual drunkard, and renders all efforts to rouse him to a full sense of his misery abortive. This is an evil which he must expect to combat; but he has *cause* and *a right* to complain, when the regulations of the legislature present so many facilities to the encouragement of this national sin. While by his temperance and other movements he is combining to promote sobriety, he may well ask that his efforts be en-

couraged by some other more reasonable and feeling plan than the provision of prisons to punish those whom legalized beer-shops have first depraved. The multitudes of places where intoxicating drinks are temptingly offered to but too willing a people, is a crying enormity in our national economy; while the existence of those of the lowest class (the beer-shops) have been found to be the prime incentives to crime, the nurseries of misery, the swift destroyers of the national health. To this the attention of the legislature should be drawn by earnest and persevering effort and expostulation. Another source of opposition to benevolent attempts after the amelioration of the working-man's condition, is to be found in the large amount of Sabbath desecration.

The blessing of God cannot be expected to descend on a people that outrage His laws; and without that blessing all our efforts to do good to our fellows will be in vain. Individuals might do much, and should do much to rectify this evil. Every man, by his own example, and by the right use of influence may operate for good upon his neighbours in this respect; but employers might give, we think, a great impulse in the right direction by the adoption of some such plan as this. It is notorious, that a large part of the improvident workman's wages is spent on the Saturday night and during Sunday; and often spent in the ale-house rather than on the things the family needs. Now, if the day of payment were one *to be succeeded by a working day*, much of this evil would be avoided, and Sunday trading would, to a great extent, be done away—the workman's income having been already expended before the day of rest came round. This would be a preventive process, but corrective measures are also needed. The old enactments for the prevention of Sunday traffic are allowedly obsolete and inefficient. Shops are constantly opened, and even places of amusement of questionable character frequented without any law available for the abatement of the evil. Thousands of our young are enticed away from schools and the house of prayer by the tempting allurements of these places—and it is time for those who acknowledge

the Divine authority and perpetual and paramount obligation of the Christian Sabbath, to cry aloud for the interference of the legislative authorities that the evil shall be stopped by law. While the day set apart by a wise God, for the worship of Himself, and for special attention to the things that belong to our present and everlasting peace, is thus abused, thus intruded on by unhallowed enticements to lead the people astray—the period in which the Christian man hoped peculiarly to act upon his fellows, is curtailed or absorbed, and the means by which he expected, under God, to succeed, are rendered inoperative by the practical withdrawal of the subjects on which they were designed to act.

The Sabbath, by its *interruption* of the ordinary business of the world, seems to point to its eventual and final *termination*, and may lead the mind to look beyond the limits of time, the boundaries of a state of probation, to the boundless field of eternity and the permanency of a period of retribution. It is a holy interval which carries back the thought to what man was, and causes the gentle breathings of memory to sweep one string which yet is braced on the spiritual harp—the string of consciousness, and cause it to vibrate with the echo of the pure pleasures of paradise. It is also the sweet symbol of “the rest that remaineth for the people of God,” that causes the soul to ponder and prepare for the purer, higher, richer pleasures that are at God’s right hand for evermore. Its holy hours, therefore, should be jealously guarded from unseemly and unsanctified interruption, and its sanctified limits should be hedged in by human, as well as by Divine restrictions. The energy of the Christianity of the land should be stirred up in defence of the due observance of this day; and our rulers should be taught, and all be made to feel, that a man should not, must not, rob God of that which He has so clearly, so loudly, so uniformly claimed as peculiarly his own. But all these regulations and contrivances are but preliminary and preparatory to the only means of elevating the people, viz., the direct application of Divine truth to the ignorance, indifference, and immorality of our working-classes.

The word of God, blessed and applied by the Spirit of God, is the great instrument of man's sanctification, the grand panacea of human ill. It is the hammer which breaketh in pieces the rocky hardness of the natural heart; the light which chases away the congregating mists of prejudice and misconception; the Divine voice which perforates and penetrates the stopped ears, and startles the sleeping conscience; the sword of the spirit which lays open the secret corruption of the hidden man of the heart; the incorruptible seed by which the barren soil is made to bear; the milk by which the infant soul is nurtured; the great agency by which the man of God is made perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. The simplicity of its truths descends to the dulness of the most obtuse, while their grandeur defies the grasp of the most enlarged mind, and their sublimity outruns the progress of the most daring intellect. We see "the image of God's sovereignty in the commanding majesty of its style; the image of His unity in the wondrous harmony and symmetry of all its parts; the image of His wisdom in the awful depth of its mysteries; the image of His holiness in the unsullied purity of its precepts; the image of His goodness in its uniform tendency to promote the good of man in both worlds;" it is, in short, "the power of God unto salvation unto everyone that believeth." <sup>a</sup> If, then, we would have the beams on which the platform of our national safety rests, freed from the dry rot of the fungus-spawn of scepticism and infidelity, we must take care that they be Kyanized—saturated with the anti-putrescent principles of Bible truth—if we would see the uneasy surgings of our popular storms subside, we must shed largely abroad this spiritual oil upon the troubled waters; and if we would see our national glory blaze out conspicuously, and flame steadily in the sight of observant nations of the earth, we must minister largely the same nutritive element on the hearth of our country's home. The uniform effort which Satan and his emissaries make to undervalue and withdraw this spiritual weapon intimates wherein the weakness of his system exists, and whence he specially fears defeat.

<sup>a</sup> Introduction to Matthew Henry's Commentary.

The tendencies of the evils of the present day all seem to point to the fact, that the Scriptures are the great obstacle in the way of the accomplishment of the sinister designs of the great enemy of man. Against these, the gathering forces of the God of this world are converging—while false friends would strive to persuade us to desert the great bulwark of our security. We are taught, that in the days of modern warfare modern tactics are needed; that the old keep that has baffled the skill, and turned back the fury of ten thousand foes, must now be left for the modern entrenchments which reason, expediency, and polemical skill have thrown up. Be it ours *to cling to the old hold still*. The weather-stains of a hoary antiquity are upon it; it is hallowed by a thousand happy tokens of past triumphs; the weapons of a thousand mighty men are hung up as trophies round its walls; it has lost none of its strength—has forfeited none of our love. It was planned by the great Captain of our salvation; it is grounded on the rock of eternal power and wisdom; and when the stream of time has carried headlong hundreds of the pretty-looking structures that would put its plain simple beauty in the shade, it will still stand the defence, the comfort, the home of those who love it, honour it, trust it, after all. This, then, is the weapon to be wielded—the agency to be employed. But here the ignorance and indifference of the people present an obstacle. The number of individuals who have not the Holy Scriptures will, on investigation, be found to be a large one; that of those who possessing them, cannot, or will not profit by them, is still a larger one; and thus multitudes, practically, are excluded—or exclude themselves—from the benefit which the revelation of mercy brings.

To meet, modify, and remove this sad state of things, the employment of town missionaries and Scripture-readers has been tried, and found to be admirably calculated to effect good. These simple, unaffected men, in the devotion of duty to God, and zeal for their fellow-men, enter into the dense masses of the corrupted population of our large cities. Their career is witnessed but by a few interested friends of their holy cause, and



the eye of that great Being whose cause in reality it is; they are swallowed up, apparently, in the crowds they have sought to penetrate and to affect; and it is only by the little green spots that here and there appear in the midst of the moral wilderness, that we discover that the precious seed sown in faith and watered by the tear of earnest supplication, has been quickened of God and brought forth its peculiar and proper blade. One such missionary, employed in a wretchedly degraded part of London, has become conspicuous for the surprising influence he has gained even over abandoned characters; and it was owing, we believe, to his exertion, that an honoured nobleman, whose name is associated with every effort made to ameliorate the condition of the poorer classes, was enabled some time ago to hold a kind of council with *upwards of two hundred London thieves*, as to the desirability, or rather the practicability (*for they all thought it desirable*) of their abandoning their sinful courses. The reports put forth from time to time by the varied societies for home missionary work, are full of interesting though often painful details. First, developing the long-forgotten necessities of spiritual instruction to the poor, they have practically proved the manner in which that instruction must primarily be conveyed. There is an appearance of direct attack upon their vices and their evil courses, when the minister of religion or a member of the higher ranks of life enters into the hovels of our most degraded operatives. Misery seeks ever to hide itself from view, and conscious guilt, until it has acquired the brazen impudence which continual hardening of the heart induces, loves to sneak away out of the sight of virtue. In the visit of the lay reader, there is *less of formality*, and therefore, *less of the repulsiveness of intrusion*. He paves the way for the more formal teaching of God's truth, and the very simplicity of the means employed, the acknowledged weakness of the instrument used, seem to fit it more peculiarly for the blessing of that God who "hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and who hath chosen the weak things of the

world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence."

Let, then, such machinery be extended. A large system of agencies like this should be laid down in all the parts of our land, where the multitudes of our operative poor are congregated. By these, as by so many distinct pipes, the pure, healing, comforting, refreshing water of life would be largely conveyed where now no spiritual water is. We should not be long without pleasing evidence of the success of such a measure. There is a well-known chemical toy, called a zinc-tree, which will serve to illustrate the truth which we are anxious to convey, in respect of the process we are recommending. The beautiful metallic crystals which we admire so much in this well-known toy, are formed by reason of the greater affinity the dissolved metal has for the zinc introduced than for the acid in which it had been held in solution. In the fluidity and semi-transparency of the acid we never could have suspected the existence of a metal capable of assuming so many beautiful forms; and in the apparent uniformity of the transparent misery and vice in some of our worst neighbourhoods, we little think that there may be those who hate what they cling to, and would long to attach themselves to something higher. The simple reader of the word of God enters such a hopeless neighbourhood. His message and himself prove strangely attractive—spirits that seemed to have been crushed hopelessly under the load of guilt, hear with delighted surprise of the love of Him who was made sin for them. The glad tidings of salvation come as the balmy breath of spring over the icy deadness of the wintry soul; and tears of penitence, that seemed to have been frozen for ever in the depths of the cold heart, now trickle down again; and many a holy root which seemed for ever nipped and withered in the barren heart, begins now to exhibit signs of life, and soon the beauteous flowers of holy thoughts and

words and works adorn the plants which were once thought to have entirely decayed away.

Again, the circulation of plain and simple tracts, bearing directly on the great truths of justification by the blood of Christ, and holy enlightenment by the Spirit of God alone; these (and in the issues of the Religious Tract Society, and others of kindred character, they are furnished of admirable character and in great abundance) would be as so many additional mouths by which each agent might speak, and might minister the faithful warning, or impart the needful consolation, and prove the efficient instrument under God when no human voice was near. Then, the plain and faithful preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, should be still more extensively, more prayerfully, more perseveringly, more affectionately ministered than ever. We thank God that so many good men, and true in all the different sections of our Evangelical Protestantism, have been raised up in the midst of us,—that the pure water of life, filtered from all the bitter, nauseous poison of man's invention and wisdom, has been now so long and so largely flowing through the length and breadth of our land; and we grieve when any obstacle is allowed to turn away the health-imparting stream from those that are nigh unto death from its lack. Is there any such hindrance discoverable amongst us now? Can we point to any matter in which, as Christians, we err, and by which we are impeding the progress of that great work which professedly, and we trust really, we have so much at heart? Yes, there are our *own unhappy divisions*. There is a narrowness and littleness in the religion of far too many amongst us. We are absorbed in our attention to the differences by which we are distinguished from our fellow-Christians, and overlook and forget the magnitude and the multitude of the topics on which we are agreed. We seem incapable of the abstraction which realizes the unity of object, purpose, motive, prospect, privilege, which distinguishes the family and household of God; but set out to examine the peculiarity of feature, expression, stature, colour, by which the separate

members are characterised. We seek the honour *of the sect* rather than that of *the Saviour*, and while we rejoice that our party is strengthened, we seldom ask whether the entire circle of the Church of Christ is becoming enlarged. This sectarian tendency is visible in almost everything we do; and this is one great cause of the comparatively little success in the many good things we attempt. We see it in our competing, if not almost conflicting, zeal in our varied charitable societies for the spiritual good of our fellow-men both at home and abroad—to it must be attributed the constrained kindness, if not cool caution, or even courteous opposition, which exist between different denominations amongst us—yea, even the preference of individual ministers, the religious rivalry of different congregations, would teach all who were not blinded in this matter, by very familiarity with the evil complained of, that the primitive zeal of the Church has been lost because its charity has oozed out, and that the primitive energy of the people of God has passed away, because their unity has been so seriously lost sight of.

The various atoms of which the Church, which God is building, was composed, were originally in juxta-position and close contact. They cohered by mutual attraction, as well as from the pressure from without, which early persecution applied. But Satan soon contrived to insinuate his own people into the midst of the people of God—the outer force was withdrawn, and the original and true atoms of which the real and imperishable temple will consist were *put asunder*; and ever since the very *suspicion of counterfeits* has engendered separation. Separation has tended only to perpetuate that abnormal state in which distrust and jealousy pervade those who, as attracted towards one common centre, must necessarily and naturally have a tendency mutually to approach each other. Let us then look to this matter in our attempts to ameliorate the working-man's condition. "Not to proselytise but to evangelise," should be each benevolent man's motto. It is not wise, not seemly, to quarrel over the brands plucked from the burning,

while the fire is still raging, and brother immortals are perishing. It is from the enemy, not from our friends, that our captives must be derived. Ours should be the noble resolution of the great apostle Paul, "to preach the Gospel beyond" the limits within which it had already been proclaimed, and "not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand." We should be conscious of new pleasures, and see a wider expanse of wonders in the kingdom of grace, were we actuated by such a spirit. The spirit of rivalry is a spirit of pride, and therefore, one that stunts and deforms the soul. Were this laid aside, we should soon find the children of God of every colour and every clime, come joyously together to recount what great things God had done, and how the word of God had free course and was glorified. We should see them sympathise with each other—bear one another's burdens—share each other's sorrows—and partake of each other's joy.

But another feature in the opposition which meets the man that is wishful to benefit his operative fellow-countrymen, is the prevailing conviction of the hopelessness of the effort. This objection may be expected from merely worldly men; and to such it may be at once sufficient to reply, that for the ultimate result we do not hold ourselves responsible, neither do we acknowledge failure because no present fruits appear.

The work is in the hands of one higher and wiser than we, and it is often according to his plan, that the hand that sows shall not reap; nevertheless, "he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together." But in the mouths of professing and seeming believers, this objection is peculiarly unhappy and singularly suggestive of feelings of pain. Can such men, if they know God, look into their own hearts and see whence they have themselves been raised, without acknowledging that what could snap asunder such chains as those which sin had coiled round their imprisoned souls, may well be believed to be adequate to any emergency, competent to the removal of any obstacle that might shut out the sinner from happiness, and holiness, and heaven, and

shut him into the blackness of darkness for ever. But there is an evil of a somewhat contrary nature, which is equally injurious. The former *expected nothing*, the latter *expects too much* from the agency employed. And *each is wrong*. Those who have paid attention to the cultivation of a garden, will often have noticed the injurious effects which have resulted from injudicious, because ill-timed, *artificial watering*. The evaporation consequent on such an act under a scorching sun, would *generate extreme cold*, and the delicate organs of the plants we proposed to benefit be nipped, and wither and droop.

The happy results which arise on the fall of the natural shower, are traced to two causes. There is a particular modification of the atmosphere unperceived by our ruder senses, but felt by the exquisitely delicate organs of the vegetable world, which causes a thousand little mouths of the plant to open to receive the coming blessing, while the particular element which is to constitute its nutriment, is gathered from the atmosphere in which it had been floating, and from which it is brought down by the descending rain. And thus it is with the water of life. It must contain the *true carbon* by which spiritual plants are fed, that is, must contain the whole counsel of God, ministered without reserve. But, moreover, the preparation of the heart must have been made by the Spirit of God, the mouth of the soul have been opened. Here then appears the necessity of prayer for God's blessing. While the servants of God are in the plain combating with Amalek, they who view the struggle with interest should ascend, Moses like, the hill of communion with God, and there "lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting," should cry out to Israel's God and Israel's hope, that He would magnify His own great name. While thus we honour Him, we may calculate upon His favour, and find, in the satisfaction which comes back upon our own hearts, a sweet evidence that "he that watereth others shall be watered also himself."

Let us all, however, rise to the emergency of our times. The evil is increasing by every day's delay, and

the difficulty becomes greater the longer we forbear to grapple with it. Our national sins, our social evils must find us out. Like an arrow shot upright into the air, the longer it is returning—the great height it is reaching—and the heavier the blow the deadlier the wound, with which it will return on the head of him that shot it. The crisis in our history may be nearer than we imagine—the explosive gases are generating in the very bowels of our political and social economy—and fearful will be the shock which shall bury in one common heap of ruin all that we have loved and valued, as venerable for its age, or desirable for its beauty, or valuable for its utility, or endeared by the holiest, happiest, associations. Ignorance and irreligion are influences that extend on every side, and assimilate all around to their own unhappy character, if they are not opposed, counteracted, and checked. *While men sleep*, the enemy is busy; and the ground that has not been brought under the industrial care and skill of the spiritual husbandman, will soon evidence in an unlooked-for crop of noxious weeds that the seed of evil has been largely scattered on a congenial soil. Now, then, is the period of action.

The hearts of multitudes of our working men are yet sound at the core—much neglect has not so soured their spirits that they will refuse the offered hand of reconciliation. Their ears, truly, have long been familiar with the exaggerations of their grievances which popularity-seeking retailers of abuses have cunningly proclaimed—their feelings have oft been roused against what they have been taught to believe an unfeeling aristocracy, or an unjust tyranny in their employers—but they are not yet insensible of kindness. *They are English workmen still*—loyal still, industrious and sensible still. Let us step in at once between them and temporal misery—between them, and political suicide. Let every man to whom God has given the blessing of competence feel that his sympathies are due towards *those that strive in vain against penury*—still more, let *each one whom God has blessed with intellectual, and,*

above all, with spiritual wisdom, feel that he is called upon to stand up in the midst of his fellows that are wandering in the paths of folly, and say, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Our teeming population increasing yearly in so seriously large a ratio—the daily multitudes that pass from the midst of our abodes of wretchedness and guilt into the fixed realities of an eternal world—the account we shall have to give of the way in which talents were expended, all these considerations give force and fervency to the exhortation which urges us to our duty. And when we consider the blessed effects which, with God's blessing, must result from our Christian efforts, we have a new incentive to immediate exertion.

How happy a change does Divine truth effect. There is a kind of spiritual photography at work, the beauty of whose productions we cannot but admire. On how many a tablet of the heart, once corroded and defiled by the rust of the old corruptions that had been long at work upon it—on how many such a tablet, prepared by the peculiar process which none but the Divine artist knows, has been beautifully pencilled by the pure light of the Sun of Righteousness, the beautiful lineaments of the image of God reflected in softened, sober, suitable rays from the word of His truth. Some may fail to see the delicacy of touch by which the features of the new man in Christ Jesus are drawn—others may fancy that there is a melancholy cast—a gloomy expression about these features; but the truly wise will be enraptured to see how wondrously the result has been brought out, and how sweetly on another immortal have been stamped those holy impressions which in the purer, brighter, holier light of an eternal world, will be recognised as characteristic of the household of faith, and the family of God. What, then, is in itself honourable and delightful as an employment of trust, a work of love, that is also in its wondrous results still especially deserving of our attention. We are said to be "workers together with God"—"fellow-helpers to the truth." How proud a privilege! how high an honour! how



distinguished and dignifying a duty! But how must a practical commencement be made? Let each employer at once set about a personal and sober examination as to the condition of those who are under his employment. Let him make it evident that he is himself willing to investigate, and, if necessary, to remove real grounds of complaint. Let every benevolent man look into some particular section of the great operative community, investigate the character of the abodes, incomes, habits, recreations, vices of our operative poor. Let him exhibit himself as the friend of order, but not the less on that account the friend of the poor man. Let him turn the eye of society and the authorities of the land on acknowledged and discovered lack of national regard and good faith towards the oppressed poor—and and let him determine himself to plead the cause of injured and suffering worth. He is doing a patriot's work, and will prove the benefactor of his species and a blessing to his country. He is bringing together classes that have far too long been unknown to each other, and so effecting reconciliation where suspicion, alienation, dislike existed before.

*The rich misunderstand the poor, and the poor misunderstand the rich.* In many a rude form will be found a pearl-like soul; and horny hands have a vigorous grasp which deep emotion gives. We pass the smutty workman by, and scarcely remember that he has a heart to feel. We have yet to learn the manner in which he may be approached. The master-key which can unlock the different secrets of his heart, and disclose the hidden wealth and beauty to be found within; this has been so long laid aside, that we have forgotten how to apply it. We need to seek it out afresh, and to acquire a skill in applying it to the hearts whose richness we would know. *But workmen misunderstand the rich.*

In many an employer's noble heart, the schemes of a large benevolence are formed. He longs to see all around him happy, but he discovers that his very advances are not well received—that he *has wounded where he wished to comfort*, and has increased suspicion in

minds whose confidence he sought to win. He is told continually of the intemperance, the extravagance, the unreasonableness of the operative portion of the community ; he accepts as specimens of the class those who, while they contrive to make themselves conspicuous as champions, are no fitting representatives of the feelings and character of the honest operative. So does misconception spring from ignorance—and ignorance is the offspring of *imperfect communication between the classes*. He that removes this misconception, by opening out fresh channels of intercourse, and new avenues of mutual knowledge, he is doing effectually that great work after which mere political dreamers sigh and sigh in vain ; he is cutting the very sinews of anarchy ; draining the marshes where political disorders spring ; and conferring a boon upon all classes in the country that calls him son. As members, then, of the great human family ; as patriots to whom the quiet, comfort, glory of our island home is dear, we must feel impelled to this noble work. And when we regard ourselves as Christian servants of the King of kings, and entrusted with the sacred talent of Divine truth, the obligation becomes deeper still. Christianity is misrepresented and caricatured before many of our working-men ; be it ours to present it to them in *its beauteous simplicity*, and in the *attractiveness of truth*.

The Word of God is undervalued or unknown ; let it be ours clearly to exhibit the *claims it has to our regard*—the *evidence on which it claims* our confidence. Let us familiarize our working-men with its heavenly truths, and point out how that promise, precept, threatening, invitation, doctrine—are all combined in the happy proportions which infinite goodness and wisdom knew would make them suit the taste, and meet the necessities of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

The day of God is profaned. Let us unite in one holy alliance, to cry aloud in the nation's ear, that such " sin is a reproach to any people," and to point out to our Sabbath-breaking working-classes, that this holy day is the bulwark which a compassionate Deity has raised for

the protection of want against the pressing tyranny of power ; for the defence of labour from the drudgery of slave-like prostration before the hard taskmasters that will be rich.

The name of God is dishonoured or forgotten ; be it ours to point our ignorant fellows to that love which spared not his own Son ;" that mercy which " waited to be gracious ;" that holiness " which cannot away with sin ;" that wisdom which " doeth all things well ;" that justice which will in " nowise clear the guilty ;" that omniscience which makes detection certain ; that judgment which makes conviction undoubted ; that power which makes execution assured. Thus we may be led to put ourselves into communication with indifference, that love may be kindled, and zeal quickened to devotion in the service of the King of kings ; and then, when the happy homes and happy faces of our working fellows announce that prosperity has returned, and the quiet progress of our country's well-being intimates that order has resumed its sway—and the lifting up of hearts and hands testifies that a lost God has been found, and His forgotten service revived ; then shall we feel, as the shadows of the evening gather round us—that we may well thank God, and anticipate the pleasures which he has prepared for his believing and obedient people.

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